The New REPUBLIC

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The Week

THE most striking aspect of the knockout blow administered to the Republicans in the election is not the positive endorsement of the President and his policies so much as the decisive rebuke to the kind of attack made upon them by the conservative forces of the country. Normally there is a swing away from the administration in the mid-term election. There were many reasons for such a swing this time, foremost of which was the continuation of depression, the long postponement of the hope for revival. That the Republicans could turn none of these circumstances to their advantage, that they actually lost instead of making the expected gain, shows plainly enough that a large majority of Americans are firmly resolved at least not to go backward, no matter what the future has in store. Generalizations about liberty and regimentation mean little to those who are still chiefly concerned with the liberty to have bread and butter; people are so painfully impressed with the achievements of business in the past that they are not frightened by the alarm raised against government interferences with business. The bankruptcy of Republicanism was clearly apparent; resort to empty phrases, coupled with the complete absence of an intelligible program to substitute for that of the President, made an unfavorable impression on the minds of the voters. The advantage lies, under conditions like these, with men who at least appear as if they were trying hard to accomplish something for the general benefit, no matter what privileged toes are stepped upon.

ANOTHER feature of the election that deserves comment is the evidence it gives of the continued loss of prestige by those classes which have always regarded themselves as the leaders of opinion and the rightful rulers of the country. For many years past, all one had to do in order to sense the drift of popular sentiment as a whole was to talk with the leading spirits of chambers of commerce and with the foremost bankers, to listen to the gossip in rich men's clubs, to read the editorials in the established city dailies and country weeklies. Such a test this time would have led one to expect an overwhelming opposition to the national administration. What The Saturday Evening Post said would have indicated at least the trend of public opinion. But while the ideas of the thin strata at the top were moving in one direction, those of the rest of the people were moving in the other. Mr. Roosevelt has never fully understood how wide a support he aroused by the hope he held out of a different and better management for our economy; he has never sensed how far that support would follow him in even the most radical measures. Provided he really wants to inaugurate drastic changes—an assumption which is hardly justified—his greatest weakness is that he is always being frightened into surrenders by those who are far lower in public esteem than he. These surrenders will prevent him from fulfilling his promises, and may in the end lead to a tumble for him as swift as was his rise.

THE only gains made by forces with which the President is not in complete sympathy were by those on his left. On the basis of early returns, which never pay much attention to minor candidates, it

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appears that the basis for a national left opposition was laid. Senator La Follette was reëlected by an increased majority, and Philip La Follette probably has won the governorship of Wisconsin, though both cast off the traditional Republican label and ran under the new Progressive Party. Governor Olson, Farmer-Labor, strengthened his hold on Minnesota and carried with him many others of his faith, though the party program threw just as many chills into local business as Sinclair's in California, and Olson himself was accused by conservative elements of favoring the Minneapolis truck strikers in his use of the state forces. Sinclair's defeat was apparently by a much narrower margin than pre-election forecasts had led us to believe. Norman Thomas apparently increased the Socialist vote as candidate for Senator in New York, while in Connecticut Jasper McLevy, Socialist candidate for Governor, carried Bridgeport, one of the state's three largest cities, and for the first time Connecticut will have Socialists in the legislature, who will probably hold the balance of power. Probably in Oregon and Iowa too, third-party forces made gains. Couple these facts with the defeat of extreme rightists who had appeared almost unconquerable, such as Senators Reed of Pennsylvania and Robinson of Indiana, and you have the broad significance of the election. The New Deal is reprieved by a powerful leftward drive; if it does not live up to the expectations of those who trust it to fulfill its promises, the country is likely to outrun Mr. Roosevelt.

MERRIAM'S victory over Sinclair in California was by a far smaller majority than had been predicted; for once a Literary Digest poll seems to have gone rather far astray—presumably because Sinclair's chief strength lay in groups in the community who were particularly hard to reach for straw-vote purposes. Just what were the factors that led to Sinclair's defeat, it is difficult to say at this distance from the scene—or for that matter, even in California itself. Everyone knows that money was poured out recklessly to defeat the Epic candidate, that the press, the radio and the movies combined, with few exceptions, to lie about him, that employers bullied their employees into voting for Merriam, etc. No doubt these things had their effect. But no doubt, also, some realistic progressives refrained from voting for Sinclair, on the theory that as Governor his hands would be tied, that his failure in office would be a disastrous setback for progressivism, that his program did not represent the best thought available in this field, and perhaps that he is better suited to the author's study than the desk of the busy executive. One thing is certain: that the ferment he set in motion has not ended. More will be heard of these ideas in California, and it is not impossible that other men may come forward as their spokesmen, men without the long string of political liabilities that Sinclair has been accumulating in a lifetime of pamphleteering in every possible field of social reform.

SHORTLY before election day, California was flooded with thousands of copies of a frightening story—"Thunder Over California"—issued in pamphlet form by the Democratic Workers' League for Governor Merriam. The story recites the harrowing experiences of a former resident who, having left the state just before the election of Sinclair, has returned some thirty years later to see the havoc wrought by the "communist" Sinclair. The horrible conditions that he found, you can well imagine—nationalization of women, abolition of the home, brutal suppression of the church and of all human liberties, collapse of industry, etc., etc. What makes this politico-literary effort exceedingly interesting is that this identical story had appeared in Minnesota about one month earlier—under the title "After Thirty Years." It had been written by Robert C. Emery to open the eyes of Minnesotans to the menace of communism—especially if Governor Floyd B. Olson were to be reëlected (as he was). And it seemed so good to the Democratic Workers' League of California that they apparently decided it was just the sort of stuff with which to beat Sinclair. So the story was transplanted bodily, with minor but appropriate changes in the California version: Sinclair's name for Olson's, Anglo-Saxon characters for Swedish, the Catholic Church for the Lutheran, and so on. Does this suggest, perhaps, that syndicated fascist literature is to be the keynote of future campaigns? What economy of thought and effort there would be in having one basic formula easily adaptable to each danger spot—Minnesota, Wisconsin, Oregon, Washington—and, of course, to be put out in a Grand National Edition with Roosevelt as the arch villain and communist threat in 1936!

THE Best Trick of the Month in radio circles is the new program sponsored by Liberty Magazine. Liberty is now owned by Mr. Bernarr Macfadden, who has copied the highly successful advertising methods of True Story Magazine. When True Story advertises, it pretends to be aiming at the general public, but in reality is seeking chiefly to interest advertising men who might spend money in its pages. Similarly, Liberty is conducting an "open forum of the air," with guest speakers on public questions of general interest. In theory, all sorts of views are to be presented by all sorts of speakers; but in fact, those who have been invited to use Liberty's extremely expensive time are not only ultra-conservative, but they are either advertisers or men close to advertisers. We understand that competition for a chance to speak on the Liberty forum hour is very great. Here is a new technique in advertising solicitation which we predict will be widely copied. It means, of course, that the radio will be more than ever devoted to spreading conservative doctrine and no other.

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IF President Roosevelt came forward with a proposal to spend an enormous and unlimited amount on something that would not improve the life of a single American citizen, but might on the other hand lead him to suffering and death, imagine the protest that would arise. Yet in effect that is just where the policy of our naval conferees in London is leading us. They insist on maintaining the 5-5-3 ratio among the fleets of Great Britain, the United States and Japan, while Japan insists on a modification of it. Each side backs its insistence with a tacit threat that there will be no agreement at all if it does not have its way. In that case, the American delegation and naval experts mean Japan to believe that no matter how many ships she builds, we shall build enough more to keep the existing ratio. Nothing will be gained; much lost in useless expense. The commitment is indefinitely great. The danger of war is increased. This is a practical question of the utmost moment. Just how much are Americans willing to pay to have a fleet two-thirds larger than Japan? Just how much is it worth to them? If the purpose of the United States government were merely to protect our shores against a possible Japanese invasion, this supremacy would not be worth one devaluated cent, for naval preponderance is not necessary for this purpose. No hostile fleet could cross the Pacific and inflict any real damage unless it was twice as large as its opponent. What is it, then, that we need the ratio for?

LAST week's municipal elections in Great Britain showed amazing victories for Labor candidates. Labor's gain was 740 seats in 1,300 contests; the party won forty-one towns outside of London, and in the metropolis it will rule fifteen out of twenty-eight boroughs for the next three years. While most of the contests were fought on local issues, Labor as a whole opposed the "economy program" of the Conservatives, and argued that the larger expenditures which are part of the general Labor policy are "money well spent." The results of these elections would seem to indicate that British voters have recovered from the fear of Labor produced by the false accusations made in previous national campaigns, such as the charge that owners of postal savings would lose their money, made in 1931, and the accusation of nefarious plotting with the Communists, made in the notorious "Zinoviev letter" forgery.

LAST Saturday the officials of the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, after a week of hurried consultations, reversed their hasty action of the Saturday previous, when they had announced to the public that labor difficulties "compelled" them to close up shop in Cleveland, abandon 300 stores and dismiss some 2,000 employees. Apparently all the insuperable difficulties that had made merchandising "impossible" have suddenly vanished: the company announces that it will reopen the stores, put the employees back at their old jobs and permit them to join any union of their choosing. In return the A.F. of L. unions involved have agreed to submit future disputes to arbitration before striking. If the controversy could be settled so simply and quickly, why was it necessary for the A. &. P. to abandon the stores in the first place? The answer in part, no doubt, lies in the A. & P.'s well known hostility toward unionization of labor. In a similar dispute some dozen years ago, the company abandoned its warehousing operations in Jersey City, when the employees threatened to organize.

BUT in Cleveland the A. & P. apparently had other reasons than its anti-union attitude for closing its stores. Chain-store competition there is as keen as, if not keener than, in any comparable section of the country, and the A. & P. is said to have been getting the worst of it. Though figures are not available, trade reports have it that in recent years the A. & P. has made little, if any, profit on its Cleveland stores. In addition, the chain has lost considerable business and popularity through its refusal to extend any relief credit to the city during the crisis of last year. Other chains and independent stores were willing to carry the city up to a sum of a million dollars until relief funds could be obtained. Thus the A. & P. received none of the $12,000,000 of local relief expenditures. The company possibly felt that it could make an "example" of Cleveland and show its thousands of employees throughout the country that they could gain nothing by union activity. What the A. & P. apparently overlooked completely was the unfavorable public reaction that resulted from its high-handed tactics of throwing 2,000 out of work. All in all, the whole episode is an unedifying example of the irresponsibility of large-scale corporate management. And for the A. & P., despite the present settlement, it undoubtedly constitutes a costly blunder.

BY A vote of 241 to 65 the House of Commons last week adopted the national government's hotly debated Sedition Bill—a piece of repressive legislation that leaves England but a step behind Fascist Italy and Germany in the abrogation of common civil rights. The measure, described by Professor Harold Laski as "the gravest menace to public liberty that England has known since 1817," provides heavy penalties for the dissemination of literature that might "seduce His Majesty's Forces from their duty or allegiance." What this means, in effect, is that radical and especially anti-war writings are in serious danger of suppression in England, should a reactionary regime decide that such a step is necessary or desirable. The bill makes a crime of even the printing or possession of literature which *might*, if it fell into the hands of soldiers or sailors, alienate them from their duty or allegiance. And to make the measure effective, the police are given unprecedented powers to search homes and individuals on suspicion.

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THE national government, in response to the bitter and widespread public criticism of the bill has declared that these extraordinary powers will not be abused. So presumably there will be no immediate terrorization of radicals and pacifists, no immediate ransacking of homes and libraries for volumes of Karl Marx. Yet the powers are there to be used when, as and if the occasion arises. It is ominous that the ruling class in England, the reputed citadel of civil liberties, felt it necessary to enact such drastic legislation. For the Sedition Bill gives not only a dark hint of the menacing approach of war and fascism, but also of the determination of those in control to use the extreme power of the state to put down all dissenters. Tragic is the figure of Ramsay Macdonald, staunch wartime pacifist and Socialist, who was forced by his position to support the national government's bill, though he must have known that it might be used to imprison and terrorize those loyal to the ideals for which he himself fought for many years.

IF THE Germans win an imposing victory in the Saar plebicite of January 13, they will have Paris with its hysterical alarms about a *Putsch* and an invasion to thank for it. French stories of the Hitlerite *Putsch* plans were so fantastic that they defeated their own purpose and gave the enemy the long awaited opportunity of paying the Frenchmen in their own coin. France, they warned the overwhelmingly German population of the Saar, was paving the way for the entry of her own troops into the Saar region. Had not Premier Doumergue sent a quite superfluous appeal to the British and the Italians that they hold their armies in readiness to resist this mythical German invader? Had not France declared that she stands ready to send troops into the district if called upon by the League Commission? Let the population of the disputed territory—this with the gesture of the victor already firmly in the saddle—beware of such provocations. The Goebbels propaganda machine offered this notion of a threatened French occupation in a hundred variations, and the French government continued to play into its hands with mistake after mistake. Instead of promoting the idea of a second election in five or ten years, to postpone the decision until after a possible fall of the Third Reich, it insisted on a decision in 1935, and it alienated the sympathies of the world by announcing that Germany must carry out the impossible terms of the Treaty of Versailles by an immediate payment in gold for the Saar mines.

IS THE American Red Cross essentially a war machine, dominated by a military-minded group? Did it collect money from the people "to feed hungry Americans" and then set aside $4,000,000 of the money collected as a special war fund? Has it used relief money to discriminate between strikers and non-strikers? Has it spent money inefficiently and unwisely, paying excessive prices for relief goods? Out of an annual income of $3,550,000 last year did national headquarters spend only one million on relief and the remaining two and half million on salaries, administration, etc.? These are some of the sensational charges made against "The Great Mother" by John L. Spivak in an article appearing in the November American Mercury. The Red Cross, busily engaged at present in its annual membership drive, has, so far as we are aware, taken no public notice of Mr. Spivak's charges. Yet the people who contribute some $10,000,000 each year to the "Great Mother," it seems to us, are entitled to an answer. If this is not made voluntarily, then Mr. Spivak's suggestion of a congressional investigation would seem in order. For the Red Cross has a charter from Congress and its direction and activities presumably have the approval of the government.

POLITICAL events are drifting to a climax in Canada. Following the defeat within the past year of three Conservative provincial governments, four out of five federal by-elections held recently in Ontario have gone against the Conservative government of Premier R. B. Bennett. And now Harry Stevens, federal Minister of Trade and Commerce, has resigned under pressure. The Stevens affair really began last January when Stevens, in a public address, castigated big business, charging unethical practices amounting almost to racketeering. The Conservatives are the big-business party; and, following Stevens' speech, Bennett was besieged by financial and industrial magnates clamoring for Stevens' blood. But the public reaction was so great that Bennett was forced, against his inclination, to appoint a committee of inquiry with Stevens as chairman. The evidence brought before the committee more than substantiated the original charges; and although the investigation was not completed, Stevens, in July, on the eve of his departure for the West, issued a pamphlet summarizing the findings.

BUT before the pamphlet was distributed Bennett ordered its suppression. Stevens' resignation was expected then, but he held it till his return to the capital. In the meantime the Premier had left for Geneva, and it was only during the past few days that Bennett and his recalcitrant minister again came face to face. And then the storm broke. Stevens states that he has no intention of leaving his party, but his position, in view of what has happened, would seem to be almost untenable. It is rumored, on the other hand, that he might yet be found in the ranks of the Coöperative Commonwealth Federation, the radical third party. If this should happen, the chances of the C.C.F. in the forthcoming general elections would be greatly enhanced; for there is little doubt that he would take with him a large section of the younger and more progressive members who have for some time been chafing at the domination of the Conservative Party by reactionary business interests.

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ONE of the most hopeful projects of the P.W.A. is the Soil Erosion Service. It has only a ten-million-dollar fund to combat a process that is costing American farms something in the neighborhood of $400,000,000 a year, but it is a determined step in the right direction and it sets a precedent that may in future become a normal, nationwide service. More than twenty areas have been selected in various parts of the country where different types of erosion problems are presented. The bulk of these concern major river-control work, storage dams and large-scale projects of that nature. But the work along the Sangamon River in Illinois is more intimately related to the average American farm problem. Here the difficulty is sheet and gully erosion in rich, relatively flat country, the kind of land that normally is not thought of as a victim of erosion. Under sod it would not be, but with corn the prevailing crop, the sudden summer showers sweep away the rich, open soil at a rapid rate. In the Sangamon River valley a five-year coöperative agreement has been made between the farmers and the Soil Erosion Service. The farmers agree to permit their lands to be used as the Erosion Service sees fit, and the latter, with P.W.A. funds and C.C.C. labor, will undertake the work. The objective is to teach farmers the need of small gully dams, of terracing or pasturage on steep slopes and of contour plowing or grass stripping in cornfields. The hope is that success along the Sangamon will be copied voluntarily elsewhere.

Ford Predicts Prosperity

HENRY FORD says recovery has come. He has raised his production schedule for next year to a million cars or better, more than he has made since 1930. "The depression would be over for the whole country very soon, if American industrialists would take hold of their plants and run them with good, sound American business sense." Mr. Ford has, as usual, a keen eye for publicity. This statement, as his staff probably expected, made the front pages of the newspapers and a prominent place among the editorials—even in The New Republic. From this we infer that the new 1935 model is now in active preparation and will before long be revealed to the admiring eyes of American motorists.

Aside from its advertising value, however, what hope is there in this statement? How can other industrialists swallow the prescription of taking hold of their plants and running them with good, sound American sense? Vague as this phrase is, it would surely seem to involve certain rather definite conditions, according to the Ford method. Mr. Ford both owns and manages his business. In this he complies with the classic Adam Smith conception of the single business enterpriser. Few other great industries in the United States are managed by their "owners"; almost none is the domain of individuals without the intervention of boards of directors, finance committees, etc. Mr. Ford owes no allegiance to bankers or the financial world. Industrialists in general will find it difficult to take hold of their plants in quite the Ford sense.

Even more important, most other great corporations are carrying heavy fixed charges or, if not obligations to bondholders, at least a duty to outside stockholders. Not so Mr. Ford. Like others, he does indeed have to pay operating expenses if he is to remain long in business. But he is far more free than most to improve his product and sell it for a low price, hoping that volume of sales, based on mass production, will bring him a profit. Compare his situation, for instance, with that of the railroads or utilities, which, instead of continually lowering prices and offering their customers increased advantages year after year, struggle to keep their prices up, on the theory that a return on the existing investment must be paid at the existing level of output. And compare his action with that of steel and many other organized industries, which now under the N.R.A. are striving more than ever to restrict production instead of enlarging it and are maintaining as high prices as they dare. Greater and greater volume, made possible by continued pressure for more efficiency, resulting in lower costs and lower prices, which has for years been Mr. Ford's simple rule for success, is to day followed by fewer American business men than it was when Mr. Ford first tested it. The conditions imposed by finance capital and modern business organization are such that it cannot be. And because this combination of competition and enterprise is not general, Mr. Ford's prescription for recovery will not be taken, and recovery cannot come according to the classical rules, through the action of independent business men.

Mr. Ford's rule is not infallible even for himself, as the past few years have proved. It did not prevent him from having to lay off thousands, or keep his sales from dropping. Today his outlook would be far less rosy if the purchasing power of lower-income groups had not been stimulated by government benefit payments to farmers, by collectively imposed labor standards, enforced largely through those very labor organizations that Mr. Ford has in his own plant striven to suppress, and by numerous other measures quite outside the scope of "sound American business sense."

The economic puzzle before the capitalist world is how to increase production sufficiently to absorb the unemployed, make public relief unnecessary and supply the population with a decent standard of living. This is precisely the puzzle that modern capitalism finds it almost impossible to solve. It cannot be done without more output than we have ever had in the heavy industries that produce capital goods and durable goods for consumers. Increased activity in automobiles helps, but meanwhile there is small market for new dwellings, new plants and machinery, new rails and trains and locomotives. There can be little market for such things without

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either much greater government spending than we have had or a large amount of new private investment. The watchdogs of capitalism object to sufficient government spending, but they are not ready themselves to invest. They will not invest because there is no market, and, because there is no market they will not invest. So they are stalled on a vicious circle, and continue to blame everyone but themselves.

In spite of Mr. Ford's optimism, there is no prospect of a marked change in this situation for many months to come. Where is new capital investment taking place in large amounts? Where are the issues of securities that would finance it? Where are the old industries so overburdened with orders at existing capacity that they will want to enlarge it? Where are the important new industries, whose markets are expanding so rapidly that they must place heavy orders for equipment and materials? Until something of this sort is in sight, no reasonably cautious person will predict the end of the depression. And nothing of the sort is likely to happen until the prices of equipment and materials are low enough, in relation to the cost of making consumers' goods, so that a profit may be realized even though the products are sold at low enough prices to stimulate increased buying.

Mr. Ford must learn things about our economic system that Adam Smith never knew if he is to offer advice that can really be helpful.

Regimentation in the Colleges

BACK IN the twenties, it was the constant despair of college deans and trustees that the rights of self-government, self-discipline and free expression granted to student bodies were wasted in meaningless wars over which fraternity should rule the campus, in endless debates as to whether the dormitory drunk should be publicly or privately censured and in editorials vilifying the annual football rival. Today when students are exercising these same rights to express vigorously their opposition to war and fascism, to discuss frankly the society of chaos and misery they have inherited, the rights have often been summarily withdrawn and the offending students disciplined. For an editorial against war the editor of The Santa Clara Weekly was expelled and for the *lése majesté* of criticizing the Republican candidate for Governor, the editor of the University of Oregon paper was recently ousted. But the most flagrant trampling of student rights has occurred at the City College of New York and the University of California in Los Angeles (U. C. L. A.).

In the former college as a result of a student protest against the administration's welcome to 350 students from Italy, the Student Council has been suspended, as many as twenty-five students were at one time debarred, and eighteen arrests have taken place of undergraduates who were picketing President Robinson's house with demands for his resignation. At U. C. L. A. Provost Ernest C. Moore, acquiescing in California's traditional methods of handling dissenters, summarily suspended for one year five student leaders, including the president of the student body and the chairmen of the forensic board, the men's board, and the scholarship committee, plus a Phi Beta Kappa honor student. The Provost, who is either a very jittery gentleman or an astute politician, declared an attempt to be under way "to destroy the university by handing it over to an organized group of Communist students." The basis for his charge was student efforts to set up a student-controlled open forum! Only one of the five students had even remotely engaged in left-wing student activity. The irate fathers of the other four in an interview with the Provost demanded that he apologize for the broad and unfounded accusations to which he had given national circulation through his newspaper release.

Alarmed by the storm of student and liberal protest—3,000 students on his own campus assembled outside the Provost's windows to demand a fair hearing for their leaders, while their classmates at Berkeley voted to strike in support of the suspended students—Mr. Moore has reinstated four of them. But the Provost is continuing his campaign against the two organizations that have made him so uneasy, the National Student League and the Student League for Industrial Democracy. One of the most ominous factors in both the C. C. N. Y. and the U. C. L. A. situations has been the appeal by responsible administration officers to "loyal" students to purge their universities of the influence of these two organizations. Provost Moore actually broadcast an appeal to athletes and fraternity men throughout the nation to help end radical agitation among students. It is with a sinking feeling that one wonders whether this is the beginning of a fascist student movement like that which made German universities such hells for liberal, socialist and pacifist professors as well as students during the closing days of the Weimar Republic.

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Blue Eagles and Black Workers

ON THE eve of the code-making process, more than 20 percent of Negro workers normally attached to industry were without jobs. Underpaid Negroes were a burden on prosperity in the South. They constituted 28 percent of the population of the South Atlantic, 26.9 percent of the East South Central and 18.7 percent of the West South Central sections of the country. As long as these large segments of the Southern population remained impoverished and unable to buy consumers' goods, the South was destined to lag in recovery. Moreover, even a slight rise in retail prices in Southern communities, unaccompanied by a rise in the wages of Negro workers and the reëmployment of at least a portion of the unemployed Negro industrial workers, would prove catastrophic because their consumption would sink below the starvation level to which it had fallen in the last four years.

Taken as a group, Negro industrial workers were helpless to defend themselves against demands made, especially by representatives of Southern industry, for longer hours and lower wages for those occupations, industries and geographical divisions of industries in which the predominant labor supply was Negro. Except for a few exceptional groups, such as the miners of West Virginia or the longshoremen on the South Atlantic Seaboard, they were unorganized and without any perceptible power to bargain collectively. In nearly six hundred code hearings fewer than a dozen Negro representatives of organized labor have appeared.

Thus there was little hope of obtaining by any process of collective bargaining labor conditions better than those prescribed by law in the codes of fair competition drawn up by the N.R.A. What hope there was lay in the keeping of the Administrator and those to whom he entrusted some of his powers. The measure of improvement of labor conditions among Negro workers depended entirely on the amount of betterment created for them under the codes.

In the face of a problem as grave as has been indicated, officials of the National Recovery Administration met the appeals of those seeking the integration of Negroes into this part of the recovery program with an unpardonable sophistry. They dealt out technicalities in answer to cries for bread. Rather than face boldly what any intelligent person was willing to admit to be a highly complex problem, they engaged in misleading dialectics and pseudo-scientific ballyhoo.

The first opportunity for a solution of the problem came in the cotton-textile-industry code. In this industry Negroes had been crowded out of all skilled occupations and were employed, if at all, in outside crew gangs and as cleaners. In addition, the wholesale shutting down of plant operations had occasioned widespread unemployment among Negro cotton-textile workers, out of proportion to their percentage ratio in the textile industry. The situation faced by these workers was this: they were wholly unorganized, they were barred from skilled occupations, they were the lowest-paid group in the industry. Their only hope of reëemployment was a substantial shortening of hours of work in the occupations of outside crews and cleaners. Their only possibility of greater buying power lay in an increase of the wage rates in these occupations.

The code as effective on July 17, 1933, made no provisions for reduction of hours or increase in wages of outside crews and cleaners. It was not until January 1, 1934, that any consideration was given to those occupational groups into which practically all of the Negro workers fell. Meanwhile, the price of flour, cornmeal, lard and other like commodities sold at company-owned stores increased by an average of 30 percent. The group most in need of consideration was put off to the last.

January 1, 1934, was set by the President as the date when the cotton-textile industry should propose a wage-and-hour scale for these exempted classes. The repeated assurances of N.R.A. officials that every act would be done in a "goldfish bowl" led to the belief that these scales would be made the subject of a public hearing, at which time evidence of conditions among these workers could be presented. Those who held this belief were mistaken. Without public hearing, without affording the opportunity to labor representatives to present data on this issue, the National Recovery Administration issued an executive order creating scales which provided that outside crews and cleaners should get 75 percent of the minimum wage already set and should work four hours in excess of the maximum weekly hour scale then in operation. Thus for the group that contained the largest proportionate number of unemployed, the reduction in hours was materially less than for those groups where the proportion of unemployed to employed in the industry was less. Also for this group, which had suffered starvation wages six months longer than any other class, which was being paid a rate much lower than that paid to any other group, and to whom the established minimum wage—because of inadequacy or nonexistence of collective-bargaining power—meant the maximum wage to be received, the executive order provided a subnormal wage.

Now the reasoning of high officials of the N.R.A. ran something like this: Negroes were not alone affected, for all outside crewmen and cleaners were treated in the same fashion; further, the labor pro-

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visions established by the executive order of January 1 marked a substantial improvement in the wage rates and hourly maxima for these classes. There was a half-truth in all this. Those white workers so unfortunate as to be in the exempted classes were affected in the same way as the Negro workers. But for them there was also the twofold opportunity of escape into a better paid occupation, and improvement of conditions through collective bargaining. For the Negro textile worker neither of these was even a bare possibility. Moreover, the brunt of the discrimination, while not cast in terms of race, was none the less borne by Negroes. It was true also that the $9-a-week minimum did mean an increase in the wages obtaining in some mills. For others—especially those employing Negroes in large numbers, as the four Cone Mill units near Greensboro, North Carolina—this minimum was actually less than the minimum existing during the worst period of the depression. Even on the basis of a weighted average of the wages of this group of workers in the industry before and after the executive order took effect, it is doubtful if any substantial wage increase could be demonstrated. And, furthermore, when the upward surge of commodity prices in company stores is considered, wage increases in terms of increased buying power amounted to practically nothing. If N.R.A. officials did not know this to be the economic consequence of the "secret" executive order, it was because they had been unwilling to listen to positive proof of these facts at a public hearing.

The cotton-textile code served as a precedent for the remainder of the textile industries. Thus the unfavorable conditions established for Negro labor in that code were used to the disadvantage of an additional 20,000 Negro workers in other branches of the textile industry. The device of singling out for differential treatment those occupations in which Negro workers predominated was used to the advantage of the employer group in more than thirty other codes of fair competition where such a method could be successfully employed.

It is only when the varying geographical differentials of a number of codes are analyzed that the argument in terms of cost-of-living difference used in support of them is shown to have no bearing. If cost of living accounts for a differential of 2 or 3 cents an hour in one industry, why is there a differential of from 17 to 30 cents an hour in other industries? If low prices in Delaware occasion low wage rates in the fertilizer-industry code, why is it that those same low prices are not used to place Delaware in the category of "South" in codes for other industries? The basic reason for these inconsistencies can be found in the occupational figures for these industries. Wherever the predominant labor supply of a geographical section is Negro, that section is called "South" and given the lowest wage rate. Thus, the "economic Mason-Dixon line" [illegible] way of extending itself to prevent Negro

workers from receiving high wage minima. Moreover, admission that the presence of Negroes in an area occasions a lower wage rate for that area has been openly made by proponents of the North-South differential in numerous code hearings. The attempt of the N.R.A. economists to attribute the differential to variances in cost of living between the two regions is the sheerest casuistry.

That the geographical differentials are based on inefficiency of industrial workers in the South—and by this is meant inefficiency of Negro workers—is a reason seldom expressed by a well behaved N.R.A. economist, but one that is uppermost in his mind. Although unsupported by any single respectable piece of research, and although controverted at least in part by studies of reputable economists, there still pervades in N.R.A. circles the belief that Negro labor inherently is less efficient. They have been shown that low wages breed low efficiency, that the whole theory of the N.R.A. is not to grade workers on the basis of efficiency, but rather to establish a minimum wage rate for all workers regardless of the issue of relative efficiency. They continue their discrimination.

Numerous other devices are used to thrust Negro workers into low-wage groups. Some codes provide a wage rate based on the rate paid in 1929. Those who were paid in excess of a certain amount in 1929 are given 10 cents an hour more than those who received less than that amount in 1929. This "economic grandfather clause" enables employers to pay white workers 10 cents an hour more for doing the same work in the same locality than is paid Negro workers, simply because Negroes are certain to have received less than the standard wage in 1929. Other codes provide for a percentage increase over the wage for June 15, 1933. In the hotel code, Negro bellboys in many hotels in the South received a 20-percent increase on a salary of $15 a month, while white clerks received a 20-percent increase on salaries of $80 and $100 a month. Again, a provision in some codes allows that a certain percentage of the employees—generally one out of five—may be paid 80 percent of the code minimum. Thus it is possible to single out Negro workers for abusive treatment.

Not only has the formation of codes left huge gaps through which nearly all the benefits that should go to Negro workers have seemed to fall, but the compliance machinery has been so constructed and so enforced as to deny to Negro workers in the South any guarantee whatsoever of equitable treatment. In the beginning, enforcement of the codes was placed in the hands of local compliance boards made up of members of chambers of commerce, many of whom were themselves code violators. There was no guarantee that the individual making the complaint would be protected from discharge. In one case an employer in the cotton-garment industry in Arkansas fired 194 Negro girls because he could not find out the name

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of the person who complained of his paying only $6.16 a week instead of the code minimum of $12. Yet these workers have not received any of their back pay and there has been no action taken by the N.R.A. against the employer.

In recent months, compliance has been placed in the hands of paid employees of the N.R.A. This has done little to correct loose enforcement of the codes so far as Negroes are concerned. A complaint was sent in against a fertilizer plant. The complainant was a Negro who got 10 cents an hour instead of 25 cents, who worked seventy-eight hours a week instead of forty provided by the code. An investigator from the N.R.A. visited the city where he lived and had him come to the lobby of a white hotel, where Negroes were not allowed. The man came in overalls. Then, in the lobby of the hotel, in the presence of strangers, the N.R.A. investigator proceeded to question the complainant. Obviously, the man was not free to give testimony. The investigator reported the case closed and gave the company a clean bill of health. The complainant lost his job.

There are thousands of such cases throughout the South. It is useless to complain. Nothing is ever done. But certainly N.R.A. officials cannot plead ignorance of these cases. Nearly every week for over a year, Negro organizations have asked that qualified Negroes be appointed to positions in the N.R.A. in an effort to adjust the difficulties faced by Negro workers. Up to last May no Negro had been appointed above the rank of messenger except for one Negro woman, who was speedily dismissed on the ground that there was nothing for her to do. Constant pressure finally produced the appointment of Dr. Abram Harris to the Consumers' Advisory Board. Dr. Harris resigned in disgust September 10.

Negro industrial workers had the right to hope that their already inferior economic status would not be aggravated by the N.R.A. There is not a section of the country where Negroes have not suffered because of the Blue Eagle. That bird has become for them a black hawk, a predatory bird which makes prices go up but not their wages, which makes them lose their jobs, which weakens their economic position. To them the N.R.A. has but one meaning: "Negroes Ruined Again." They see the growth of a trade-union movement in the hands of the A.F. of L.—a movement which discriminates against them and drives them out of skilled jobs. They see Southern employers arrogantly thumbing their noses at N.R.A. compliance machinery and declaring that they won't pay Negroes code wages. As one Negro said, "Before the Blue Eagle we was just one-half living, but now we is only one-third living."

JOHN P. DAVIS.

Ballad of Roosevelt

The pot was empty,
The cupboard was bare.
I said, Papa,
What's the matter here?
I'm waitin' on Roosevelt, son,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt,
Waitin' on Roosevelt, son.

The rent was due,
And the lights was out.
I said, Tell me, Mama,
What's it all about?
We're waitin' on Roosevelt, son,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt,
Just waitin' on Roosevelt.

Sister got sick
And the doctor wouldn't come
Cause we couldn't pay him
The proper sum—
A-waitin' on Roosevelt,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt,
A-waitin' on Roosevelt.

Then one day
They put us out o' the house.
Ma and Pa was
Meek as a mouse
Still waitin' on Roosevelt,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt.

But when they felt those
Cold winds blow
And didn't have no
Place to go
Pa said, I'm tired
O' waitin' on Roosevelt,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt.
Damn tired o' waitin' on Roosevelt.

I can't git a job
And I can't git no grub.
Backbone and navel's
Doin' the belly-rub—
A-waitin' on Roosevelt,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt.

And a lot o' other folks
What's hungry and cold
Done stopped believin'
What they been told
By Roosevelt,
Roosevelt, Roosevelt—

Cause the pot's still empty,
And the cupboard's still bare,
And you can't build a bungalow
Out o' air—
Mr. Roosevelt, listen!
What's the matter here?

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Central Europe's Jigsaw Puzzle

THE UNCERTAINTY and unrest created by the Nazis have entirely dislocated Central European economics, already badly shaken by the world crisis, but the entire blame does not fall on the National Socialists. The tendency to autarchy—self-sufficiency—in Germany started before Hitler's coming to power, shortly after the death of Stresemann. Many of the smaller countries had embarked upon this autarchy experiment long before the Germans started it: industrial countries like Austria and Czechoslovakia had developed national agricultures; agrarian Hungary, Rumania, Poland and Jugoslavia had developed their industries. Then Germany, the best market for Central and Southeastern European products, added her autarchy experiment to the damage already done by the self-sufficiency efforts of the smaller countries. This further dislocated the remaining trade and seriously aggravated the crisis in Central Europe and the Balkans.

Austria, a Victim of the Peace Treaties.—The little Austrian Republic, with 6,500,000 inhabitants, was created by the peace treaties through a process of elimination, the victors retaining the rich parts and the Austrians getting a beautiful country but one devoid of natural resources. It was clear from the beginning that little Austria could not live an independent economic life. There were only two possibilities to keep her going: either union with Germany or close economic coöperation with her neighbors. The union with Germany was forbidden by Articles 88 and 80 of the Versailles and St. Germain treaties; the clauses of the peace treaties that provided for coöperation on a basis of preferential tariffs among Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary were never carried out.

Little Austria, after the War, was left in possession of well developed and once prosperous industries that had been created to cater to the requirements of an empire of fifty-five million people. The so-called succession states erected high protective tariff walls against Austrian products. During the boom period in the inflation days these industries made another fatal mistake. The division of the empire, for example, had left the textile industries in Austria in an odd situation: the spinning mills were in Austria; the weaving and half-finishing mills in Czechoslovakia. Instead of effecting an agreement between the two industries whereby one country could complement the other's activities, each country developed the part it lacked: Austria built weaving mills, while Czechoslovakia erected spinning factories, thus creating industries twice as large as those under the Empire. After the boom, both countries discovered their mistake.

The Self-Sufficiency Movement.—Through the influence of the strongest bourgeois party in the Austrian Parliament, the Christian Social, an agricultural self-sufficiency movement was created in Austria with the aid of protective tariffs, state subsidies, etc. Whereas in the year 1924 Austria was compelled to import 66 percent of her wheat, 26 percent of her rye and 35 percent of her barley, today Austria needs to import less than one-quarter of her wheat; she is almost self-sufficing as far as rye and barley are concerned, while she is already exporting potatoes and dairy produce. Her formerly large hog imports from Poland, Jugoslavia and Hungary have been considerably reduced. In 1924 Austria imported 69 percent of her sugar; today she imports only small quantities from Czechoslovakia.

This development, however, was by no means natural. Where, before the War, the mountains were used only for cattle grazing, today rye is being grown in altitudes as great as 5,000 feet, and wheat as high as 3,000 feet. It is uneconomical to raise wheat at such an altitude. While in the Hungarian lowlands high-quality wheat grows without any fertilizer, each ear containing 40 to 60 wheat grains, in Austria, with much artificial manure, at the expense of deep fallows, only 25 to 30 grains are contained in each spike. The costs of tillage are thus 50 percent higher, while counting all overhead charges, the cost of production is 300 percent greater than in the Hungarian lowlands.

The number of lowland peasants in Austria who profited by this high agrarian protection is comparatively small, probably only a few hundred thousand, while the high cost of foodstuffs caused by this agrarian production has had a serious effect on the rest of the population. With high food prices the price of finished industrial goods also increased, though real wages are low in Austria. Because of the high protective duties in the neighboring countries Austria has been forced to seek markets elsewhere, even overseas, but because of her high prices she cannot successfully compete in the world markets.

Austria's Balance of Trade.—The various Christian-Social Chancellors have also conducted a decidedly anti-mercantile policy. Until about two years ago the deficit in Austria's balance of trade amounted to $200,000,000. This deficit was compensated for by revenues from invisible exports, such as tourist traffic, export of cultural products (Vienna Opera, music, etc.) and so on. The German-Austrian conflict as well as the world crisis reduced these invisible exports very considerably. Thereupon Austria drastically reduced her imports, so that the trade-balance deficit now amounts to only

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about $40,000,000 a year. But this reduction of imports proved a blow to both her industry and commerce because other countries soon retaliated.

For more than a decade Germany had been Austria's best customer for one of her most important export products, namely wood and lumber. But ever since 1930 exports of lumber to Germany have been rapidly falling. Germany bought Czechoslovakian lumber at the time she offered the customs union to Austria in 1931—and to counteract this loss, the late Chancellor Dollfuss succeeded in selling considerable quantities of lumber to Italy and Hungary on a basis of the Rome pacts, made this year. But lack of markets for lumber is still one of the greatest handicaps of this country today, with the result that in the mountain districts of Vorarlberg, Tyrol, Salzburg and Carinthia there is actual starvation. All over the country there is grave unrest because of the general poverty. This unrest first found expression in the drift of the population into extremist camps: the workers rallied to the Socialists, while the peasants of the mountains and the unemployed youth turned Nazi. Then extremism assumed a violent form in the revolts of February and July of this year.

Czechoslovakia's Foreign Trade Problem.—Except for Poland, Czechoslovakia was the only country created by the peace treaties that included no territory that had previously been economically independent. Despite this, the Czechs, partly through hard work, partly through clever financial policy—such as the currency reform of Dr. Rasin in 1921—brilliantly solved the difficult task of building up their new state and Czechoslovakia passed through six prosperous years from 1923 to 1929. But in their new-born national existence the Czechs forgot that even the most efficiently run country can only live if her neighbors also prosper. Czechoslovakia, though remaining prosperous longer than her neighbors, suddenly developed a serious crisis which reached its climax at the beginning of 1933. Imports in 1933 decreased by 71 percent, compared with the figures of 1929; exports decreased in the same period by 70 percent. France alone remained the same good customer.

The year 1934, however, brought considerable alleviation and, though the losses of the last years could not be made up, during the first seven months of the current year imports have increased by 16.6 percent over the figures for the corresponding period last year, while exports rose 20.2 percent.

Hungary Meets the Crisis.—The catastrophic fall of cereal prices on the world market since 1929 hit all the agricultural countries of Central and Southeastern Europe, and among them Hungary. These countries had passed through a period of deep depression, causing great misery everywhere. But since 1929 they had met in frequent conferences at Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade and Budapest, trying to devise methods of combating the crisis. The conference of Stresa adopted some interesting resolutions, but they were not put into practice. At the end of 1933, however, Mussolini accepted the recommendations made at Stresa as the basis for his Danubian economic policy and a three-cornered agreement, known as the Rome protocols, was effected among Hungary, Austria and Italy on March 17 of this year. This was expanded in a detailed plan on May 15.

On the basis of this agreement Hungary was able to sell over two million metric hundredweight of grain to Austria at preferential tariff rates, which brought the prices received by the Hungarians high above the world market level, while Italy bought one million hundredweight and promised to place another million on the market at favorable prices. Hungary also succeeded in selling her remaining exportable produce to Germany and Switzerland and thus weathered the worst crisis in her history.

Jugoslavia and the Balkans.—In the case of Jugoslavia the thesis that politics and economics are identical and interdependent does not hold good. Jugoslavia's best customer is her political enemy, Italy. In 1925 approximately 25 percent of Jugoslavian exports went to Italy; this figure was reduced to 21.5 percent in 1933, but it rose to 25.3 percent in the first half of 1934. While Jugoslavia has improved her political relations with Germany during the last twelve months, exports to Germany, which amounted to 14 percent of Jugoslavia's total exports in 1933, fell to 12.8 percent in the first half of this year, just when there was visible improvement in the political relations of the two countries.

Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece have all gone through difficult and anxious times. Rumania suffered not only from low prices of agricultural produce but also from the indebtedness of the peasants, and the plan of saving them by a moratorium granted to the agricultural population seriously endangered the credit of the country. Moreover, the competition of Soviet Russian oil ruined the once flourishing petroleum industry. Bulgaria suffered from the political animosity of Greece, which abrogated a trade treaty with Bulgaria in 1930, while the Turkish attempt to achieve self-sufficiency struck another blow at Bulgarian trade. Greece suffered from the stagnation of shipping and from the decline in exports of currants and wines. The provision of work for one and a half million exiles from Turkey taxed Greek finances very heavily. Though the development of agriculture and of new industries in Greek Macedonia made Greece economically more self-sufficing, the Bulgarian milling industry received a serious blow by not being able to export more flour to Greece.

The Need for Integration.—We have briefly surveyed the economic situation in the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe. The findings are by no means pleasant. The break-up of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a serious blow to the eco-

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nomic development of the individual sections. Where before there had been a large unit, now smaller units tried to set themselves up as self-sufficient bodies. In consequence, the number of officials in each country was increased; seven new customs barriers were created instead of the one before the War. The cost of production and of exportation increased, thus reducing export possibilities. In a big unit, such as the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, a boom or a depression had different effects: while the boom in one branch helped to create a corresponding one in the other branches, depression could be counteracted very often by a boom in another industry. In small territories, however, the effects of depression were automatically multiplied.

Under these circumstances, it is obvious that an integration of the former parts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, or even of a larger unit, into a customs union, would produce favorable results. Such an integration, however, is not easy. The nationalism of the newly created countries is still too strong to permit of their making many sacrifices to the others. Moreover, during the fifteen-year period that has passed since the creation of the new states, the vested interests have become so powerful that their abolition would be a difficult matter.

What can one do, for example, with the newly created Czechoslovakian or Austrian agriculture? In both countries the land-owning and the peasant classes control the course of politics. A customs union between Austria and Hungary, for example, would reduce the price of cattle and cereals in Austria so greatly that the peasants, with their heavy mortgages, would be faced with ruin and starvation. In such a customs union Hungarian industries would also be ruined. During the last fifteen years Hungary has developed large textile and engineering industries. The banks financed the establishment of these industries, and their abolition would be a hard blow to the whole credit system of the country. This would react on agriculture. Moreover, many aristocrats and gentry, closely connected politically with the rulers of Hungary, have heavy investments in industry and would fight any attempt to abolish this source of income.

We find a similar situation everywhere. Vienna was, once upon a time, famous for her millinery industry. Women in Prague and Brünn wore Viennese hats. On the other hand, Gablonz in Czechoslovakia had an extensive toy and glass-bead industry. After the War Czechoslovakia developed a millinery industry and Vienna established factories for wares that once were produced in Gablonz. Today both the millinery industry in Vienna and Prague and the toy and glass-bead industries in Gablonz and Vienna are ruined.

Signs of Progress.—If a sudden change is impossible, there at least exist signs of slow progress. The countries have tried desperately to find remedies that would yield at least some results without creating an upheaval in the established economic system. I have mentioned the Rome protocols, which, first, created markets for Hungarian agricultural produce, second, allowed preferential tariffs, some open and some secret, to Austria on behalf of Italy, and, third, planned the better utilization of the seaports of Trieste and Fiume for Central European trade.

In February, 1933, the Little Entente decided to increase trade within the three countries. While there were great difficulties in the way (Czechoslovakian agrarian protection on the one hand, and Rumanian and Jugoslavian industrial protection on the other), the third meeting of the Little Entente economic council, established a year and a half ago (this third meeting having been held in Prague in September of the current year), has shown some results by organizing river traffic and by uniting and improving the telephone and telegraph services among the three countries, while a method of extending the volume of trade is being considered by a special committee. Without Austria and Hungary, however, any solution would be only a half-measure, because their geographical position is such that without their coöperation the Little Entente countries cannot exchange produce at reasonable terms.

Hope for Coöperation in Central Europe.—In this regard the Italo-French *rapprochement* may have far-reaching effects on Central European trade developments, though even in the event of a complete understanding between Italy and France one must not expect a utopia. The Little Entente is closely allied to France; Austria and Hungary to Italy. Thus the Italo-French agreement may yield a *rapprochement* between the systems of the Rome protocols and the economic grouping of the Little Entente. Such coöperation, even though small at first, would undoubtedly alleviate the worst hardships brought about by the depression. But such a *rapprochement* presupposes the reëstablishment of the Italo-French entente of the war days. Yet even this coöperation would not be perfect. One must bear in mind that Germany was for years the best customer of Austria and Czechoslovakia, and that potentially she is the same for Hungarian and Rumanian and, to a lesser extent, Jugoslavian agricultural products. If she is willing to participate —and all signs show that she realizes the necessity of breaking her political and economic isolation— in this general Central European coöperative system, then probably more can be accomplished than even optimists now expect. But one must not expect a panacea from even large-scale coöperation— which will probably remain restricted to the use of preferential tariffs granted for a few hundred customs items. The utmost that can be attained is only marked improvement, which in five, ten or twenty-five years may lead to more substantial results. And even this is dependent on the bettering of Franco-Italian and of Italo-German political relations.

Vienna. M. W. FODOR.

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Fresh Fish

THE Boston Fish Pier workers are out on strike, and have taken the Boston, Gloucester and New Beford fishermen with them. In a fumbling, inarticulate way, they are trying to set up an industrial union for the fishing industry. Even in Boston, the strike has attracted little newspaper notice, yet in the long run a strong, unified workers' group ought to mean a revolution in the industry. It ought to mean cheaper fish, of better quality, for the whole Eastern half of the country.

In Washington the strike has been regarded with mixed feelings. Politically minded members of the administration fear its effect, just before election time, on the business interests identified with the First National Bank of Boston. The First National of Boston is the center around which the New England fishing industry revolves, and has great influence. But in the New Deal agencies concerned with workers and consumers, the strike has been watched with prayerful attention.

Fish is—or ought to be—a basic national food. In western Europe, after bread and tea or coffee, fish from the North Sea is perhaps the most important item of the working-class diet. Over here, in the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, we have a fish "pasturage" equally productive. But over here, fish continues to be a relatively high-cost food, sold primarily during Lent in the spring and the Jewish holidays in the autumn.

Washington experts accuse the industry of being still in the period of General Grant and the high bicycle. While the Pacific Coast herring and salmon canners have made great advances in the preparation and distribution of their products, the New England fish wholesalers have remained chiefly gamblers on the fluctuations in the fish supply. They are accused, in particular, of never having made a real attempt to develop regular, six-day-a-week markets, and of relying on exorbitant profits during the religious holidays to maintain themselves the year through.

No impartial, scientific standards exist by which to check these accusations. But from appearances, they seem just. Furthermore, not only through its high prices for fish does the industry seem responsible for depriving the whole working class of an excellent, plentiful food, but it also appears to be a harsh exploiter of its own labor. For two years now, the fishermen allege they have been working literally for grub, a fo'c's'le berth and a bit of tobacco. Their families, where they have families, have had to subsist as best they might.

Most of the fishing boats are directly owned by the Boston Fish Pier merchants or by giant food corporations like Standard Brands and General Foods, which form a substantial minority of the industry. Where wholesalers both own the boats and are the buyers of the fish, the share or "lay" system, under which the men are supposed to be partners in the enterprise, becomes a farce. Even where the boats are owned by families or by neighbors, the men are still in an abysmally weak position in bargaining with the tightly monopolistic group on Boston Fish Pier. When, as sometimes happens, the men in desperation send their catch of fish, or "trip," on consignment to the Fulton Fish Market in New York City, they are usually worse swindled than in Boston.

Recently the workers of the fish industry have taken three important steps. First is the Boston strike; second the formation, under the F.E.R.A., of workers' coöperatives in Maine; third the new independent coöperative of Nantucket fishermen.

As this article is written, the Boston strike is in its third week. The men have shown extraordinary endurance and fighting spirit. They have taken over successfully the flying-squadron tactics of the recent textile strike; truckloads of their pickets have prevented boats, diverted from Boston, from being unloaded at Gloucester and New Bedford, and have persuaded the fishing crews to join the union. The shore workers, the fileters and packers and the rest, are making a straight demand for union recognition and higher wage rates. The chief grievance of the actual fishermen seems to be against "selling over." Under this practice, a boat ties up at Boston Fish Pier and, in the name of the crew, its captain contracts to sell the "trip" at an agreed price. Hours later a wholesaler's agent reappears, with the news that only a few thousand pounds have been sold at this price and that the remainder must be sold over, invariably at a much lower figure.

The most authoritative evidence on "selling over" comes from the N.R.A. hearings, held preparatory to the granting of a regional New England fish code, last February 23-24 at Boston. Listen to the testimony of a fisherman, John E. McEachen: "I know of one trip about four weeks ago that had 28,000 [pounds of] haddock, and he [the captain] sold them for $11 [per thousand pounds], and then they came down and said they had to sell them over, and on the second sale they gave him $8."

Fishermen assert that sometimes a "trip" will be sold over three or four times. Often in the last few years, a fishing boat's crew has found the proceeds of a fifty-thousand-pound catch insufficient to meet the charges against the boat for food, ice, gasoline, barrels and commissions, and after a wet, dangerous, laborious month on the Grand Banks, the men have left Boston Fish Pier empty-handed.

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It must be admitted that so far in the present strike no leader has appeared who shows promise of becoming another Sidney Hillman and of reorganizing the fishing industry with the rapidity and certainty that Hillman did men's clothing. The strike head is an organizer furnished by the A.F. of L. The strike is being supported by the New York Fulton Fish Market union, the financial secretary of which, John Grant, has opened temporary headquarters in Boston. Notoriously in the past the New York union leadership has been anything but social-minded and progressive.

In attempting to form coöperatives, the Maine and Nantucket fishermen are moving off in a wholly different direction. The striking fishermen and fish handlers in Boston are obviously accepting a class division of the industry and endeavoring to match the trade associations of the wholesalers with a strong union of their own. In contrast, the Maine and Nantucket fishermen are hoping to regain, through coöperative ownership of boats and refrigerating and packing plants, their ancient status of small entrepreneur-capitalists—the status enjoyed, for example, by present-day Wisconsin dairy farmers.

Last winter in Maine, the fishermen were destitute. Stiff-neckedly, they refused relief; "to go on the town" in Maine is a terrible thing, worse than going to jail. Instead, they asked the Maine E.R.A. for help in setting up coöperatives and for funds for gear for their boats and twine for their nets. All last summer they spent happily fishing. Canneries on shore, operated by the coöperatives, processed their catch and sold it back to the Maine E.R.A. for distribution to the unemployed. Whether these Maine coöperatives will prove seaworthy once the E.R.A.'s aid is withdrawn is a difficult question to decide.

The Nantucket coöperative is a still riskier venture. In its formation two months ago, the fishermen were lucky enough to obtain the expert advice of Dr. Fredric C. Howe, Consumers' Counsel of the A.A.A. and a world authority on coöperatives, who happened to be vacationing near Nantucket and was summoned to conference. Nantucket fishermen are celebrated for their daring and shrewdness; they may succeed in giving the Boston Fish Pier wholesalers a rousing fight.

In other sections of the country, fishermen's cooperatives have had considerable success. Largely because of the energy and drive of one leader, O. A. Clarke of Naples, Florida, the Florida Fish Producers' Association has been continuously victorious in its conflicts with fish wholesalers and consignment merchants. A herring coöperative on the California coast has up to now done well. However, it is at the moment engaged in a bitter, doubtful struggle with the canners.

The Boston strike, and the Maine and Nantucket coöperatives, are—or ought to be—of interest to consumers. The price of fresh fish for the Eastern United States is determined by Boston in conjunction with the New York market. Each year, a quarter of a billion pounds of cod, cusk, haddock, hake, halibut, mackerel, pollock and swordfish are landed at Boston Fish Pier by a fleet of more than five hundred boats. Boston sells fish as far west as Nebraska and as far south as Maryland.

The accusations brought against the industry by Washington officials are chiefly four. The first is against the method of unloading the fishing boats, which is described as slow and injurious to the fish. The second concerns the preparation of the fish—such operations as fileting—for shipment and sale. Because of the relatively wretched wages that are paid, Boston is declared to have wastefully high unit costs in comparison, for example, with the Fulton Fish Market in New York. The third criticism has to do with the technological crudeness of equipment for keeping the fish fresh, both before it is shipped and during the shipment.

However, such criticisms are of relatively minor importance beside the fourth, which concerns the industry's methods of wholesaling. With few exceptions, wholesalers are accused of failing to maintain definite, day-to-day connections with buyers in interior cities, or at least with enough buyers regularly to absorb the supply of fish. During Lent and the Jewish holidays, and to a lesser extent on Friday of each week, the wholesalers can sell fish almost everywhere. But for the rest of the time, they usually telegraph from one interior point to another, more or less at random, in search of purchasers. Since they are not equipped to keep fish more than a few hours, they frequently sell at a sacrifice, which they expect to make good by gouging their customers at the first favorable opportunity. According to Washington officials, it frequently happens that a half-dozen wholesalers try to dump fish in one city, while in another city a few miles away no offerings of fish are being made at all. They point out what seems obvious: that the best, and indeed only, way to build up markets is to assure inland towns of a steady supply of fish of good quality at prices that will permit people of the low-income classes to buy it.

The reformation of the industry, at bottom, is a much more acute problem for the fishermen and fish handlers than for the employers. Wholesalers and boat owners, with their tight, greedy grip on the Boston Fish Pier, will manage to live whatever happens. But unless a wide, stable, national market for fish can be built up, which means making fish available at low prices, the industry cannot take on new workers or guarantee the employment of the old. Nor is there much chance of its paying higher wages. Eventually, for its own sake, the fishing unions must tackle this problem. Meantime, Americans who cannot afford to pay 45 cents a pound for haddock that, at Boston Fish Pier, cost 5 cents a pound, can just go without.

JONATHAN MITCHELL.

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Washington Notes

Spotlight for the New Congress—Picking Sides for the Thirty-Hour Week Bill Fight—More Taxes?

WITH THE election over, for the next seven weeks interest will be increasingly directed toward the convening of the Seventy-fourth Congress, in the first session of which, it is no exaggeration to say, some issues of a really momentous nature will present themselves. It is interesting, I think, that with the business men and bankers still convinced that the President is steering toward the right, practically every feature of the administration program so far indicated should be of a liberal and leftish nature. This description fits the old-age-pension and unemployment-insurance legislation already in tentative shape, the proposals for greater appropriations for public works and housing, and the extension of authority for the A.A.A., which failed to get through at the last session. To all these things—and some more—Mr. Roosevelt is definitely committed. He has not the slightest intention of retreating from them and could not if he would.

This is not to say that Mr. Roosevelt personally will not take the conservative position on a number of pending questions. I am quite certain he will. Nevertheless, the general trend will not be conservative, because it cannot be without producing further economic dislocation and great political weakness, both of which he is exceedingly anxious to avoid. It is clearly impossible to pose as a liberal for eighteen months, profiting by the support of the liberal leaders in all sections, and then turn in the other direction.

The progressives—or most of them—can be induced to forgive the President's failure to live up to his non-partisan declarations in the last campaign. They can find an excuse for that in the exigencies of practical politics and in the pressure from Mr. Farley, who had put out a lot of political promissory notes in the 1932 pre-Roosevelt campaign. They would not, however, condone any open desertion of progressive principles and could be depended upon to fight any such White House reversal with every ounce of their strength. Roosevelt's opportunism has been well recognized by thoughtful progressives from the start, but so long as in the main he was facing in the right direction, his efforts to keep the support of both elements was easy to understand and his quarterback strategy equally so. It has at times been exasperating to those who wanted him to be one thing or the other, but taken all in all, he has been so much more susceptible to the liberal drive than any other President that, while there were plenty who deplored his lack of inner fire, support was given with enthusiasm.

Another fact that seems clear is that the incoming Congress will be no conservative, budget-balancing Congress, intent upon economy, retrenchment and retreat. On the contrary, if one judges from the Senators and newly elected Representatives who are already drifting in here, the tendency will be all in the other direction. Most of them will accept Roosevelt's social program just as they accepted his program last session, provided they are not asked to reduce expenditures for relief or public works. Most of them come to Congress heavily committed to a continuation of government liberality in these respects, and not one, so far as I know, made any pledge of economy in his campaign. Curiously enough, the word economy seemed to have been dropped out of the political lexicon in the recent fight. Neither New Deal nor anti-New Deal candidates used it, which, when one reflects upon the popularity of the word in former years, is interesting.

Nearly every observer here appears to agree that the big fight in the next session will center, not on the items of the Roosevelt program but on a bill not included in that program. I refer to the thirty-hour-week bill, which will be promptly introduced, is already aggressively endorsed by the American Federation of Labor and has extensive support in Congress. This, as is well known, is the proposal embodied in the Black-Connery Bill introduced in the spring of 1933, and favored by a large number of Senators and House members at the time. It never came to a showdown, because the whole thirty-hour issue was successfully sidetracked by the administration when it unloaded the National Recovery Act upon an unwarned Congress. It was then asserted that the N.R.A. made the Black-Connery Bill unnecessary, that under Section 7a of the new Act labor would get more easily its desire for shorter hours and higher pay. In brief, the advocates of the thirty-hour week were induced to drop their proposal and accept the N.R.A. as an administration substitute. Under it, it was argued, labor would be satisfied. Of course, that argument now seems a very poor joke. Labor feels definitely defrauded under the N.R.A. and the fight for the thirty-hour week will be made this time with greater determination and stronger support.

The opposition of the employer interests will naturally be intense. The claim will be that the thirty-hour week will impose an additional burden on industry that will further retard recovery and dry up sources of government revenue. With few exceptions, the press of the country will be opposed, and the struggle promises to be a bitter one. Naturally, interest in Roosevelt's attitude toward this proposition is keen. It may go through even if he does not favor it; it surely will go through if he does. Undoubtedly, it will put him on a more or less tough spot, and I am making no forecast of his position. However, he appears to agree that it is vital to reduce the relief burden, now approaching two billions a year, and that those now on relief rolls and able to work must be employed by private industry. If there has been any other suggestion for increasing employment I have not heard it. It is always impossible to foresee the developments in a new Congress, but, as things stand now, this thirty-hour-week proposal promises to be the fight of the session.

Another little matter about which I find considerable agreement among incoming members of both Senate and House is the view that the statement that there will be no need for imposing new and additional taxes at this session, made some time ago by Senator Harrison, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, was not well founded. In other words, Senator Harrison was talking through his soft Mississippi hat.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

A Field for the F.H.A.—Two Kinds of Looting—
The A. & P. Issues a Challenge—
Private Utility Propaganda

IT WAS during the heavy snows of last winter that I found myself in the Middle West. Now I have been looking at it again through a railroad-car window. Each year it seems to be a little more run down. I speak now of the physical plant. Apparently it is as hard for a can of paint to get into this farming region as for "Lady Chatterley's Lover" to get off the Index Expurgatorious. One sees now whole villages from which, apparently, every vestige of paint has vanished. There is, it would seem, plenty of work for the legions of Mr. Roosevelt's home-and-farm modernization and renovation. Up to now the only evidence of their work I have seen on this trip is the announcement on the dining-car menu that potential renovizers can borrow. Of course, it is difficult to pick up a newspaper anywhere without finding flaming notices of what this great movement, by which the President was going to put 5,000,000 men to work, is doing.

In Chicago it appears that five of the largest firms with organizations to carry on this kind of work have, in the last three months, managed to make loans totaling $66,437 under the Federal Housing Administration. That amounts to about $5,500 a week. Surely it must be clear now that the characteristic Roosevelt magic which put a housing proposal in his hat and pulled out the renovizing rabbit is not working.

In this amazing city which has just closed its exposition in a blaze of publicity, the trial of its once first citizen—Mr. Samuel Insull—is droning along with little interest. A good many people seem to be coming around to the view of the defense that Mr. Insull did it all in the interest of his stockholders. A new operator has been brought in for justice in an entirely different field of activity. A Mr. Allen, it seems, has been looting some 350 chicken farms around Chicago and has made away with 9,000 chickens. He has been arrested. His defense has not yet been announced. But doubtless his counsel will be able to show that he did this to supplement the work of the President in the pig industry and in order to cut down the supply of chicken meat and thus raise prices for the poultry men. It is entirely probable that he will not get away with this defense. After all, Mr. Allen must be made to understand that there is a difference between looting 350 chicken farms and looting 5,000 cities and towns and their utilities; that it is one thing to make off with 9,000 chickens and another to "accumulate" two hundred million dollars. Mr. Allen cannot hope to fare so well as Mr. Insull. The best he can do is to get a better deal than the ordinary chicken thief who loots a single chicken farm of a lone pullet.

Which brings us to Mr. Joseph P. Nutt, chairman of the Union Trust Company of Cleveland, and Mr. William M. Baldwin, its president. It is more than a year since I was in Cleveland collecting the data for an article about these and other bankers. These gentlemen were tried for their part in a little incident related in that story. And now they have been acquitted. The charge was that the Union Trust Company had bought $10,000,000 of United States bonds from the Van Sweringens in September, 1931. Having bought the bonds, the bank carried them as an asset. The Van Sweringens left the $10,000,000 paid for the bonds in the bank. This made it appear that the bank owned $10,000,000 in additional assets and had $10,000,000 in additional deposits. Ten days after the bank statement carrying this trumped-up information was published, the Vans bought back the bonds and the whole transaction was washed out. The criminal charge was based on the assertion that all this was done to deceive the depositors and the public as to the bank's true condition.

Like Mr. Insull, who labored to save his stockholders, and Mr. Charlie Mitchell, who struggled to save the stock market and—I dare say—Mr. Allen, who labored to plough under 9,000 chickens and raise the price of chicken à la Maryland, Messrs. Nutt and Baldwin declared that this was done to save the bank in a period of great stress. And this is, beyond a doubt, true. They convinced the jury of this and were acquitted.

But cannot anyone see with half an eye that the real criticism of these men was not that they were trying to save the bank by hiding its true condition, but that they had, by their banking methods, brought it into a condition where concealment was necessary? Of course, they were not tried for the acts by which the bank was supposed to have been destroyed. And bankers seldom are. Our laws make almost no provision for this kind of an inquiry. Banks are never, or at least seldom, destroyed by a single act. The grand climax is usually the fruit of a long series of policies persisted in for the benefit of the promoters and in disregard of the rights of the depositors. But under our archaic and stupid laws some one isolated incident is selected and the accused tried on that. In this case they were tried for attempting by an artifice to conceal the insolvency of the bank. None of the amazing series of performances by which that insolvency was produced was an issue. The verdict is then hailed as a triumph and a vindication.

There was another morsel of information out here. Clevelanders who know will tell you that the Cleveland A. & P. employees who were thrown out of work by that company's withdrawal from the city are merely so many guinea pigs. Unrest in chain stores all over the Middle West has been a subject of grave concern to these companies. The A. & P. decided to throw the fear of God into its employees by staging a demonstration in Cleveland. The A. & P. is going to stand no nonsense. By performing a drastic experiment on their Cleveland employees they have made it jolly well clear to their faithful workers in other places what to expect if there is any more of that crazy Section 7a stuff.

Here is an item worth tucking away. In the congressional fights out here in Illinois in five counties heavily affected by the coal industry, the leading issue has been the T.V.A. The Republican candidates have sought to unite the mine workers and townspeople in a war on government-controlled water power on the ground that it would spell the doom of the coal industry. What is more,

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I am told that the propaganda has been going over big with the miners and, of course, the business men in the district. Which brings me to another important observation. I have talked with a good many business men and bankers lately and I find that the big issue they are now rallying around is the menace of government spending. However, with a little questioning, you can generally get down to bed-rock, and when you do, you find that the argument stems from the terrible ogre of the government's "spending to go into competition with private industry." The private industry concerned is the utility industry, which, having robbed consumers for years and then robbed its own stockholders, is trying to make the voters weep over what the government is doing to its stockholders.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

Industry Prepares for Battle—Squeaks in the Labor Boards—K.O. for Kohler Workers

WHEN THE books of the New Deal are balanced, The New York Herald Tribune tells us, there will be many debit items but

> it may well prove that no other item was more fatally destructive than Section 7a as interpreted and supported by the radicals of the administration. . . . Had it not been for Section 7a and the support given under it by the administration to the unionization of industry there would have been no possibility of this shutting down of a great industry.

The closing of all its Cleveland stores by the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company was what provoked this bitter protest from The Herald Tribune. In these days, however, it is a rare edition of almost any newspaper, even of the so-called liberal ones, that does not voice a similar plaint. If the point is not made editorially or through paid advertisements, then it is found in the public lamentation of some industrialist, grieved to find that his happy relations with his employees and his high regard for collective bargaining have been destroyed by "labor agitators."

In view of the palpable failure of the administration to enforce Section 7a, such propaganda coming from business is almost funny—it is so completely at variance with the facts. But if the manufacturers are not subtle, they are also not dumb. Their wailings and protests, coming at a time when the administration is preparing new labor legislation for the next Congress, clearly reveal what they are driving at. They fear the discontent of labor may force a change in policy, may force the enactment of a labor bill with real force to it—one that will not only protect the right of collective bargaining, but will also outlaw the company union. Accordingly, to forestall this, every effort is now being made to blame the present labor unrest on the "new freedom" that unions are alleged to enjoy at present. *Ipso facto,* the government should not give them any further aid.

This propaganda is likely to succeed, moreover, unless the President suddenly shows an understanding of labor's problems much more sympathetic than anyone has reason to expect of him at this late date. His policy of extending the automobile code—merit clause and all—certainly offers little hope. For several months labor has demanded new hearings on this code in order to show that the merit clause has been used to discriminate against union workers and to show also that the Automobile Labor Board has been practically useless from the labor point of view. But the merit clause and the labor board, both of which labor wants abolished, are popular with the manufacturers, and at their request have been retained.

Meanwhile, the New Deal's high-powered labor machinery sputters along on half a cylinder. The latest report of the National Industrial Relations Board is at hand. It shows that the Regional Labor Boards handled 1,477 cases during August and September. Of these the Boards were able to settle only 409—or less than a third—through agreements; 147 disputes were disposed of by decisions or recommendations. Obviously, only the 409 agreements can be called real settlements in view of the high-handed attitude of employers toward recommendations and even decisions of the Boards.

The report declares, however, that these bare statistics "eloquently testify to the value of the work performed by the Boards." Perhaps, yet it can also be said that they testify twice as eloquently to the work that the Boards did not perform. It is also worth noting that this record, on a bare statistical basis, is twice as bad as the record of the Boards between August, 1933, and July of this year. In that period, 4,447 cases were handled and 2,633—60 percent—were settled by agreements. The drop in percentage of agreements from 60 to less than 30 at present reflects what everyone has observed, of course—the rapidly growing paralysis and impotence of the Boards.

A year ago the A.F. of L. Federal Labor Union at Kohler, Wisconsin, had the support of 1,865 out of approximately 2,500 employees of the Kohler Company, or a majority of two to one. Yet at the election, recently ordered by the National Labor Board and held under its auspices, the majority was just reversed—the federal union was outvoted nearly two to one by the Kohler company union. The total vote was 1,431 to 828; with the elimination of challenged ballots, the vote becomes 1,063 to 643. Startling as this shift in sentiment is, it can hardly be called surprising. With operations at the Kohler plant at a low rate, jobs are obviously limited. Is it unreasonable to suppose that the "loyal" workers—members of the company union, that is—would somehow be on a preferred list and would certainly know how to vote in the election? Quite apart from this consideration, however, the workers were confronted with the plain fact that the Federal Union had been unable to make any headway for a whole year. As a last resort, the union finally called a strike in July of this year, in which two workers were killed and forty wounded by special deputies. But the company still refused to recognize the A.F. of L. So what? Obviously, join the company union and get a job!

The decision of the National Labor Board, which took the Kohler case after the Chicago Regional Labor Board had failed to settle the strike, is one of the most extra-

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lated Section 7a by promoting a company union and by forcing its employees to join. Presumably, therefore, the company union was an illegal affair. The Board refused, however, to act on the Federal Union's demand that the company union should be dissolved because of its improper sponsorship. Instead, the decision declared that if the company union received a majority at the election it would thereby be entitled to act as the representative of all Kohler employees in bargaining. As a result, a company union that was admittedly formed in violation of Section 7a is now the only bargaining agency of the Kohler workers. Accordingly, in the refutation of the charge, so frequently advanced by employers, that the Roosevelt administration has unduly aided and abetted unionization, the experience of the Kohler workers is here offered as a case in point.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

Recent Phonograph Records

RECORDING, properly, would begin with the music —with the decision, that is, that a certain work, for one reason or another, ought to be available to a listener anywhere and at any time. Then a performing artist suited to the particular work would record it—and by no means only one such artist. In this way recording would realize fully its possibilities for social usefulness: performances of all music of value or interest would be available on records; and different realizations of the works by different artists would be preserved.

This procedure has been followed recently by the English Gramophone Company with its subscription recording, of which I will have more to say at another time. That is, it has recorded Hugo Wolf songs as sung by Elena Gerhardt, Beethoven sonatas as played by Artur Schnabel (not all its choices of artists have been so good, though). But ordinary commercial recording begins with the performing artist—the currently celebrated and popular artist who sells —and then decides on music for him to record.

This has produced undesirable results. In the beginning the celebrated performer recorded a few popular works—Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," "Scheherazade"—and for other standard works any performance counted as a performance, so that Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony was represented on the Victor list until now by the atrocious performance of Albert Coates. And many important works were not represented at all. More recently the companies have become more adventurous and have begun to fill in some of the gaps. But because the performer is more important than the music we get a recording by Heifetz of Strauss's early and unimportant Violin Sonata; or Stokowski records symphonic syntheses of Wagner operas and transcriptions of Bach's organ music, while much of the original orchestral literature is unrecorded. Also, there is poor matching of performers to music: the four symphonies of Brahms, for example, are on the Victor list in the feverish performances of Stokowski, who makes them sound in places like the Bacchanale from "Tannhäuser." To some extent, of course, the poor choices of music and performers represent the poor judgment of recording executives.

However, there are occasional perfect combinations; and in recent months there have been several. From Victor, for example, Beethoven's Piano Concertos—Nos. 1, 3, 4 and 5—with Artur Schnabel at the piano. The orchestral part of the performances is good (the London Philharmonic, which plays in Nos. 3 and 4, is very fine), but not so distinguished as Schnabel's: Malcolm Sargent is a good conductor, but no Schnabel. It is the soloist who makes these records outstanding.

Another perfect combination, also from Victor, is the Bach-Busoni Prelude and Fugue in E flat played by Edwin Fisher. And from Columbia, is Szigeti's performance of Bach's Sonata in A minor for violin unaccompanied. I put it this way because the performance impresses me as more valuable than the music. And I would say the same of Bachaus' performance of Brahms' D minor Piano Concerto (Victor), the first movement of which represents Brahms at his worst—that is, at his most inflated, bombastic and labored.

Still another fine combination, also from Victor, is a volume of selections from Renaissance vocal polyphony by Josquin de Prés, Vittoria, Palestrina and others, sung by the male choir of Dijon Cathedral. And here I might mention two volumes of old music by Purcell, Byrd, Lully, Frescobaldi, Scarlatti and others, played—not excitingly—on the quinton, viole d'amour, viole de gamba, basse de viole and harpsichord by the American Society of Ancient Instruments (Victor).

A notable recording of chamber music is Beethoven's Quartet in A minor, Opus 132 (the one, I might mention in passing, that plays so important a part in Huxley's "Point Counterpoint"), in the performance of the London String Quartet (Columbia). The playing of this group never reaches incandescence; without lacking warmth, its distinctive quality is intelligence, which suits this music admirably.

As at concerts, so on records the outstanding quality of Stokowski's performances is their technical perfection—in this case perfection both of the playing and of its reproduction. In his recordings of Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration" and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Victor) the clarity, the accuracy with which the tone-qualities of the instruments, singly and in groups, are reproduced is astounding; and the same may be said of the excellent singing which Stokowski manages to achieve in the Ninth. In this respect the records do indeed—as Victor claims of the Ninth—constitute a major accomplishment in recording. As for Stokowski's reading of the symphony, it turns out to be, for the most part, surprisingly continent and simple; but this serves to emphasize the inevitable details that are not continent and simple—among others, the fussy, overdramatic recitatives of the basses at the beginning of the last movement, without any directions from Beethoven; the sentimental retardations in the first movement, this time in contradiction to specific directions from Beethoven (to speak of the letter as well as the spirit that is violated). Stokowski is even less well suited to Beethoven than to Brahms; for he is incapable of genuine simplicity and directness, which are essential for Beethoven. But he has what is needed for his Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration"; and his realization of that work is every way superb.

The need of a good recording of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony has at last been met—by Victor and Columbia both. From the first we have a performance by the British Broadcasting Corporation Orchestra under Adrian Boult;

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from the other a performance by the London Philharmonic under Beecham. Both are very good; but Beecham's has the imprint of a more forceful musical intelligence; which means, among other things, a few details that one objects to, and that are not present in the straightforward performance of Boult.

Schnabel, Fischer, Szigeti, Beecham—these are impressive names, and one knows what to expect from them. The most exciting experiences were with a few single Columbia records from which I expected nothing. I had never heard of Marcel Maas, and was completely unprepared for some of the most sensitive, most musical piano playing I had ever heard, in a performance of a Bach Toccata and Fugue in C minor. And though I knew of Leon Goossens as an outstanding player of the oboe, I was again not prepared for the amazing tone-quality and style of his playing in Mozart's Oboe Quartet in F, with members of the Léner String Quartet.

B. H. HAGGIN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Propaganda by Degrees

SIR: Nothing in recent German propaganda, so far as my knowledge goes, has been quite so contemptible as Dr. Beard's attack [The New Republic, October 24] on the probity of Dean Pound.

From my own observations in Germany during July, and especially on the Austrian frontier and in Munich immediately after the Austrian *Putsch,* I can endorse Dean Pound's quoted remarks. According to Dr. Beard, I suppose I may now expect Dr. Luther up here at Northampton with academic honors for me! I will let Dr. Beard know when they arrive.

I can understand Dr. Beard getting hysterical over reports from Germany that do not tally with his desires; but I think it was unkind of you to let him do it in public.

Northampton, Mass. WILLIAM ORTON.

[Dr. Beard's point was, of course, the impropriety of Dean Pound's accepting an honorary degree from the University of Berlin, which is so closely allied with a government dedicated to the destruction of most of those values which scholars hold dear. The fact that Dean Pound, like Professor Orton, is a very bad reporter of what is going on in a country through which he passes as a casual tourist, was only incidental.—THE EDITORS.]

The Textile Settlement

SIR: I have read the editorial entitled "The Textile Workers Lose" in your issue of October 3 and I wonder just why it was that you should choose to do the textile workers this disservice.

The words "disheartening conclusion" typify the whole tenor of the editorial and the extent to which it is in conflict with the actual facts of the case. . . . The settlement was in truth a victory and no person in a position to know anything about terms on which the strike was terminated can be guilty of calling it "disastrous defeat for the union" as it is called in your editorial.

I think it might be a good thing for you to get our the report of the Winant Board and read it over again carefully, reading with it the President's indorsement and approval. The fact is the union can rightly expect to get materialization of all of its important demands as a result of the Winant Board's report.

I do not undertake to speak officially for the union, but I do speak as one who knows something about the issues, something about the strike and something about the report which formed the basis of its termination.

Just at this present moment the Department of Labor has 110 trained investigators in the field digging into the facts about hours, wages and working conditions. This job is to be finished within six weeks. The Federal Trade Commission is at work with equal diligence going into the financial status of the industry. The F.T.C. is giving the textile situation precedence over everything else. At the same time the National Textile Relations Board is handling with every bit of energy it can command the hundreds of discrimination cases that have been filed with it by the union. . . . Up to this time I think it fair to say that nobody has any reason to expect anything except diligence and the highest possible degree of integrity on the part of these three agencies, and to say, with this tremendous effort under way, that the strike termination was "disastrous defeat" is simply to talk tommyrot and tea-table foolishness. . . .

I have seen a great many strikes. I don't know of one that has ever been completely lost, nor do I know of one that has been terminated with the positive brilliance of achievement with which this strike was terminated under the remarkable leadership of Francis J. Gorman. It would have been possible, of course, as everyone knows, to have carried the strike on further; for, at the time of its termination the strike lines were longer and the numbers out were larger than the first week of the strike. Unions do not keep on fighting just because they like to fight. Not only is there a tremendous victory at this moment, but the machinery has been created whereby there can be a continuous and constant extension of this victory throughout every great division of the industry and that, perhaps, is more important than anything else. . . .

The termination of the strike was not only actually as victorious as the union said it was, but the only thing that could be done by men who had even half a sense of their responsibilities and half the ability to judge accurately as to how best to safeguard the welfare of an army running well over a half-million men and women.

Washington, D. C. CHESTER M. WRIGHT.

[Mr. Wright bases his criticism of our editorial on the belief—he calls it the "fact"—that the union can expect "materialization of all of its important demands" as a result of the Winant Board's report. But where can Mr. Wright find any definite assurance of such an outcome? On the union's chief demand—recognition—the opinion of the Winant Board is clearly adverse. And on the union's other demands on wages, hours and the stretch-out, the report merely recommends further inquiry. Various official agencies are now conducting these inquiries, but is it not a bit previous to hail this research as a union victory? Suppose it is found that the "facts" do not support the union's demands? Furthermore, it appears likely that no changes in the provisions of the textile codes can be put into effect without the approval first of the textile manufacturers acting through their code authorities, for the strike, it must be remembered, was called off before the industry had accepted any of the union's terms or, indeed, had accepted any terms at all.—THE EDITORS.]

By Any Other Name—

SIR: Under "Contributors" you state that the individual calling himself "Murray Godwin" has been "at liberty" for two years. His disgustingly unfair review of Hoover's book [The New Republic, October 17] causes at least one of your constant readers to hope that Mr. Godwin may enjoy many more years of "liberty."

His scurrilous comparisons—Bawds have wept into their gin; scabs have communed in bitterness, and now Hoover emerges from his sunkissed umbilical contemplation—that sort of language—gives me, I believe, the right to remark that, as Robert Burns said: "A louse, sir, is still but a louse, though it crawl on the curls of a queen," or write a review for The New Republic. . . .

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It might be more fair to your readers to print the real names of your contributors. I'll bet that behind the good old Anglo-Saxon name he uses there lurks something slimy and oriental.

Brooklyn, N. Y. KENNETH A. PORTER.

[Murray Godwin, born in western New York State, is of Irish and Scotch ancestry. Mr. Porter's letter is a sample of the anti-Semitism now spreading with the enthusiastic coöperation of pro-Hitler organizations in the United States. In Germany this sort of attack is of course carried much further, and many Nazis now devoutly believe that President Roosevelt's real name is Rosenfelt and J. P. Morgan is really J. P. Morgen.—THE EDITORS.]

For the Persecuted

SIR: Armistice Day is proposed as a fitting time to make a collection for the tragic needs of those who are persecuted in the land against which we fought. The sacrifice of the war dead in their hope for democracy should challenge us to support today those who suffer in Germany for their fidelity to religion, democracy and peace.

At this hour there are within Germany thousands of persons who do not bow the knee to Baal. Wishing to stand by their country in its hour of trial, they cherish in their lives and hearts the ideals of freedom, justice and fellowship, without which civilization in Europe cannot endure. With them and their children rests the best hope for a new birth of better things in Germany when the present tyranny is overpast. . . .

This appeal does not overlap with the appeal of the High Commissioner appointed by the League of Nations for *refugees* coming out of Germany. Our effort is to share in the sufferings of those who stay in. Gifts may be sent to The Armistice Fund, Fellowship of Reconciliation, 2929 Broadway, New York City.

(Signed) PRESIDENT ROBBINS WOLCOTT BARSTOW, PRESIDENT HENRY S. COFFIN, RIGHT REVEREND EDWARD L. PARSONS, BISHOP FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL, REVEREND ERNEST F. TITTLE.

New York City.

Criminal Syndicalism in California

SIR: The coming trial in Sacramento, California, of eighteen men and women on six counts of "Criminal Syndicalism" should arouse nationwide attention and alarm. Not only does there exist real danger of sending eighteen innocent people to prison for from six to eighty-four years, but there also exists the possibility of establishing dangerous and far-reaching legal precedents threatening the labor movement. Convictions in this case will open the path to legal annulment of such fundamental principles as the right to belong to political and economic organizations of one's choice, the right to peaceful picketing and the basic right of freedom of political belief.

Convictions, to be more explicit, mean that it will be illegal to buy, sell or possess the works of Marx, Lenin or other radical writers; that it will be illegal to belong to the Communist Party or any of its affiliations; that it will be illegal to belong to revolutionary unions; and that it will be illegal to engage in boycotts or to picket. In other words, the indictments are a broadside attack against the advanced sections of the working class. To show the seriousness of the situation, we need only mention that the judge, during arguments over demurrers, ruled *all picketing unlawful.*

The social class behind the prosecution of this test case is the oligarchy that rules California's great interwoven industry of agriculture—processing—shipping—finance. This owning-ruling class long since decided to rid itself of what it calls the "Red Menace," *i. e.,* the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union, the union that has been an ever growing threat to its sole exercise of power. A brilliant series of strikes, led by the union last year and the first half of this year, in the face of California's notorious police and "vigilante" terror, resulted in an increase to the field workers of a round 50 percent in their miserable wages. Whereas the average wage paid last year was 20 cents an hour, this year it is 30 cents.

During the height of the Red hysteria whipped up around the general strike, all "agricultural union" headquarters in the state were closed or wrecked by police and vigilantes. Caroline Decker and Pat Chambers, leading officials of the Union, together with a number of others, on July 20 were arrested and placed under extremely high bail. "Law and Order," 100-percent-American style, again ruled in California.

The trial of the eighteen accused of Criminal Syndicalism begins November 8. Only widespread protests to Sacramento officials can assure a semblance of a fair trial. There is little time to lose. Mail your protests today to Judge Dal M. Lemon and District Attorney Neil R. McAllister, County Court House, Sacramento. (Every protest carries weight. The state of California, which must sell its products throughout the nation is, as a result, dependent upon the good will of the nation.)

For aditional information write to Emergency Committee for Defense of Workers' Civil Rights, 1095 Market Street, San Francisco, California.

(Signed) Eighteen Indicted C. S. Prisoners by JACK WARNICK.

Sacramento, Calif.

Extracts from Letters

GRANVILLE HICKS is writing a biography of John Reed and would like to receive copies of Reed's letters or correspondence from people who knew him. All original manuscripts or documents will be copied and returned to the sender. Mr. Hicks can be reached at 2263 Burdett Avenue, Troy, New York.

Warren Perry, librarian of the College of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, is preparing a bibliography of John Keats. He will be grateful for information about rare editions, critical items or academic theses and dissertations.

The National Unemployed League fears that its appeal for funds in The New Republic of October 31, signed by Sidney Hook, J. B. S. Hardman, Louis Budenz, A. J. Muste and James Burnham, may have been misunderstood. The appeal was for funds to aid a nationwide demonstration of the unemployed on November 24, in which the League is coöperating with other unemployed groups, but the funds sent to Ted Selander, as the letter suggested, will be used by the League for its own part in the demonstration. The coöperating organizations are, naturally, free to issue appeals of their own.

Herbert Solow of New York City takes strong exception to the article "Minnesota Sets Some Precedents," by Anne Ross in our issue of September 12. Miss Ross, Mr. Solow feels, failed to paint Governor Olson in his true colors. "Olson," he writes, "called out and from first to last commanded the militia. Before they came, no trucks moved; after, thousands moved. Most of these had military permits; of the 'chiselers,' not one ever saw the military stockade. More than one hundred and sixty strikers were put in the stockade. Their doctors spent a week there, for aiding wounded pickets. Sellers of the strike bulletin were arrested; its reporter was ejected from the military court. The strikers were forbidden to picket, demonstrate or meet in front of headquarters. The militia raided and occupied strike headquarters and the Central Labor Union, driving into the streets the Strike Committee and the city's union leaders. The union leaders maintain that their aim in the strike was not to put Olson on the spot, but to win something for the strikers. This they were determined to do without regard for Olson's political fortunes. Consequently, when his troops attacked the strike, these leaders roused the workers against him in order to protect the strike. The 50,000 workers who cheered when strike leaders called Olson a strikebreaker were right. The raids and every act of his troops were a vicious attack on the strike, and the union leaders did no more than their union duty in protesting vigorously, rousing the workers and forcing the Governor to evacuate headquarters and make other retreats. The strike was won—*despite Olson;* had he not been put on the spot by the workers—most of them Farmer-Laborites—in accordance with the strike leaders' program, Olson's troops would have

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Canal Americana

The Farmer Takes a Wife, by Frank B. Elser and Marc Connelly. Based on the novel "Rome Haul," by Walter D. Edmonds. Forty-sixth Street Theatre, October 30, 1934.

THERE is every reason for us all to wish such a play as "The Farmer Takes a Wife" to be good. It presents a section of Americana that is rich and stirring. And, doing so, it reminds us that all over the country lies this ruddy, lively and healthy material for the theatre. We have done one thing unquestionably with success: musical comedy and revues, the theatre that emerged from minstrel shows and vaudeville. It is one of the mysteries of art that the material close to American life, simple, fantastic, elemental, intimate, early, deep-rooted, native, as the case may be, eludes our theatre. Is it because our theatre is New York, or New York is our theatre? At any rate "The Farmer Takes a Wife" concerns the Erie Canal life of the fifties.

The immediate story tells the love of Dan Harrow for Molly Larkins, a boater's cook, the toast of the canal. Back of his mind is to buy himself a farm. (He knows also that the canal is doomed by the railroads.) Back of her mind is the pride of these northern counties in the "Grand Canawl." Though in the end she goes away with him to the farm, their struggle during the course of the play proceeds from the larger struggle behind the course of it, the railroad versus those 350 crowded miles whose slow length had been opened in 1825. Devotions, pride, exaggerated passions arising out of soil and water and the rough, busy life, these underlie the whole drama—weakly, it must be said, though rawly scored—and to them is added all that possibility in variety of types, whimsicality, crude color, that the sense of the frontier has provided in America.

Mr. Donald Oenslager has designed settings for the hotel lobby, the canal bank, and the cabin of the "Sarsey Sal," good designs, one of them, the canal bank, superbly lighted. In a way his is the most convincing part of the production. Miss June Walker as the heroine has her own delightful quality, in simplicity of drawing and in voice. It is hard to tell how good or not good Miss Walker is, by reason of the play and the surrounding performances. Mr. Henry Fonda as Dan Harrow is for the most part persuasive, very much better than we might usually hope for in this farmer-boy business of the fifties, so very upstate, quaint, manly, American and all that. Mr. Herb Williams as Fortune Friendly, one of those inevitable personages in all pioneer canvases, descended from Dickens and breathed upon, doubtless, by Bret Harte, plays, out of all the actors, at least most recognizably. His style may be taken as either that of the older barnstorming comedy, now subtly toned to its Broadway values, or as a modification of musical-comedy character acting; at any rate his general attack is definite, and serves to bring us to the problem behind this venture into theatre Americana—

In the first place it has not been decided for us, or at least not been indicated how far we are to see "The Farmer Takes a Wife" as Down East or Homestead, et cetera, in the once securely established style, with its characters, virtue, vice, fathers, barrooms, pumps, whiskers, caprices of local speech (stage version), plus a soupçon of villain from the larger world. The whole event might be jolly and well laid-on theatre, if the audience can be made to take it. In that case those wandering endless characters, on and off the scene, might mean something, or mean at any rate the right degree of stage nothing, contagious and bright.

If this cannot be done any more—except with the facetiousness of certain self-conscious productions of the drama of our grandfather's day, which is quite another matter—then "The Farmer Takes a Wife" might have been saved by music and vagary, letting it all rip and sing and dance. That might have been tedious enough, or it might have been delightful, according to the genuineness of the artificiality added to it, and measured by the acumen of its mood's happiness.

As it stands "The Farmer Takes a Wife" rests on a certain intention of actuality. So far as I could tell, these people are supposed to show more than a sprinkling of truth, of local veracity, of close color and of real emotions. Their speech is constantly pointed up with idioms, local pronunciations and old expressions. Some of these the audience ignored, partly because the dramatists' use of them was not often happily contrived, not artistic in its planned economy, not watched for a certain click that comes with the placing of the phrase and the fall of the speech rhythm. For speech localism or idiom this dialogue is, as a matter of fact, despite the obvious heavy larding, both dull and without delight. Some of these expressions the audience laughed over either for the salt displayed or out of sheer ignorance. "Spittin image," for example, got a small roar seemingly because it was so readily connected with saliva, which serves to illustrate how far the patter of our plays is from the tradition of the language, since "spittin image" is, on one hand, a perfectly familiar and old expression, and, on the other, means only "spirit and image."

The characterization, also, the types, the gallery of likenesses, in "The Farmer Takes a Wife" fall into the same disaster. We have not a school in which for this play the character acting can be perfected, and we have no nearness to the time and scene by which the character aspects can be remembered.

The result of all this is that the main motive of the play, that jealous love of the canal and pride in it, does not prove convincing. The watery passion of it is what alone appears. It needs either exaggerating and underscoring or else conviction and truth of effect. We get here an interesting sidelight on our stage. To accomplish this effect needed in "The Farmer Takes a Wife," in sum really to believe that pride in the canal is such a force in these people's lives, we must be led, through detail after detail, and through one cumulative impression after another, toward such an end. As good Americans we are not willing to pay the price of this, we want to keep the passions cheerful and the fires cheery. Russians on the other hand, delighting in the ragged soul, are more than glad to pay. We do not want to pay. We want, like the cat in the Macbeth adage, the fish without wetting our paws. Very well, we must accomplish, then, within the folks of the Grand Canawl, the blessing of limelighted passions, where you need believe nothing except the validity of excitement.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Outline of Wells's History[1]

H. G. WELLS is one of the very few British writers who belonged to the lower middle class and yet managed early in their careers to reach a place of acknowledged eminence. Dickens, I think, was his only great predecessor, and the two men have several qualities in common, notably a certain copiousness and raw vigor of invention. Yet even Dickens had a little higher social rank than Wells: his father was at least a clerk in the navy pay office. Wells's father was a gardener who lost his job and scraped together money enough to run a china shop, unprofitably. His mother had been a lady's maid before declining into an unpaid household drudge; she wanted her children to lead a better life, but her highest ambition for them was to make them drapers' apprentices. The family lived over and behind their shop, in an old brick house that smelled of squashed bedbugs, with an outside toilet twenty feet from the pump that gave them drinking water. Not many people have stayed long in a background like this without being forever scarred, or have risen from it without sacrificing their integrity.

But Wells was lucky, even in the calamities that rained down on him. He says that "Probably I am alive today and writing this autobiography instead of being a worn-out, dismissed and already dead shop assistant, because my leg was broken." It was a broken leg, at the age of seven, that first gave him the habit of reading. Later a whole series of accidents and blunders rescued him from the half-dozen false starts he made before launching out as a writer. But perhaps the luckiest event of his whole career was his choice of a year to be born in. After 1866, England was developing its first jumbled system of universal free education, with new schools being started everywhere. By the time Wells was sixteen, there were teaching positions open even to conceited boys who couldn't get along as drapers' apprentices; and by the time he was twenty-one, there was a vast new public, lately disfranchised and illiterate, that was learning simultaneously to vote, read and do a little thinking. The market for ideas was a sellers' market. Wells could earn a living as a writer because new magazines were being founded and had empty columns to fill; he could rise quickly because whole sections of his own class were rising along with him. He doesn't claim to be the sort of genius who would have made his own opportunities. He had, so he often tells us, "a rather ordinary mind"; he was the representative man of his time, and the time was well chosen.

Yet with all his luck, he came near going under. He haunted employment agencies and lost one job after another; he was undernourished and tubercular, to say nothing of being divinely ignorant of the world in which he was trying to get ahead; probably it was his toughness and self-conceit that saved him. But his struggles seem brief in retrospect and, by his twenty-sixth year, the worst of them were over. This again was vastly fortunate. He had risen so fast that instead of being exhausted by his ascent he had gathered impetus; instead of feeling bitter toward mankind he was happy and grateful; he wanted the whole world to rise along with him, from mean streets into seaside villas with concealed plumbing, from ignorance and disorganization into an international planned society. At the turn of the century, the middle classes were enjoying a great burst of optimism. All good things had been spreading—knowledge, wealth, comfort, tolerance—and there seemed to be no reason why they could not continue to spread indefinitely. The coming revolution would be peaceful and would be directed by middle-class scientists and engineers, who would reconcile the poor with the rich by helping both of them. Wells gave definite shape to ideas like these; he painted the bright picture of things to come. By the time he was forty, his influence was wider than that of any other living English writer, and he was fortunate in his audience: it was the generous young people who read and followed him.

Wells's luck has persisted even to the present. Just at the moment when it seemed that he was going to fade out a little less spectacularly than Bennett, Galsworthy and Shaw, publishing a long series of volumes each one of which was reviewed a little more briefly and read a little less carefully than its predecessor—now, in his sixty-eighth year, he has come close to performing a miracle. He has written a book that stands with the best of his earlier work. For my own part, I vastly prefer this outline of Wells by Wells to his three ponderous outlines of human knowledge. "Experiment in Autobiography" is to be valued chiefly as a work of art; it is, I think, the best of his novels.

It is even a whole collection of novels, bigger and more satisfying than most of the current trilogies and tetralogies. It begins as a sort of "David Copperfield" story about a Cockney boy who lived among all sorts of bad smells and quaint characters and managed somehow to get an education. Then there is a second novel, the love story of a young science instructor who married his cousin and deserted her for one of his pupils, thereby putting an end to his teaching career. These early adventures are told without shame or reticence, but also without any attempt to dramatize the hero. A third section, "Fairly Launched at Last," is good in a quite different way. Wells was now (1895-1900) a rising young novelist, and the drama of his story was centered in his meetings with other writers and his interchange of ideas with them. He reminds us here of something we had almost forgotten: the vigor and ferment of intellectual life at the turn of the century, the passion with which ideas were put forward and debated, the feeling that all these projects would be realized in the better society of the future. Those were the great days of liberalism, and Wells makes them live again.

But his autobiography has also a final section, a chapter of fifty thousand words that deals with his career since 1900 and his picture of the world in which we live. This chapter is obviously and immensely inferior to everything that has gone before. Partly, I suppose, the sudden loss of richness and sympathy is explained by causes personal to the author. He has lived so much in public that he has almost ceased to have any private life (or at least any private life that he can now write about candidly, without hurting the reputations of people still alive). He is dealing, moreover, with recent events that he hasn't had time to digest. Even so, I think that he could and would have done a better job if he had not been held back by the fear of saying the last word about himself and his world, and

[1] Experiment in Autobiography, by H. G. Wells. New York: The

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so being left at sixty eight with no more books to write. The beginning of his autobiography is too good; it must have frightened him into making a weak conclusion.

There is, however, another and less personal reason for the positive dullness of the last chapter. Wells regards this book as being essentially a story about "the awakening of world citizenship in a fairly normal intelligence." From this point of view, the chapter in which his "citizenship" takes its final form ought to be the climax of an intellectual drama. But the climax is botched and unconvincing. His dream of an Open Conspiracy of millionaires and technicians that would take over the world and run it intelligently is a dream that has nothing to do with the shape of things as they are. Instead of serving as a reasoned guide to conduct, it ends by being a religion, one that consoles him for his personal inadequacies and one whose "releasing and enveloping relation to the individual *persona* is . . . almost precisely the same" as that of other religions. It is a faith that blinds him to everything real and threatening in the present situation—to the lassitude and fear for the future that are spreading through the Western world, to the bitterness of the ambitious young students who would like to rise like H. G. Wells but find that their path has been blocked, to the desperation of the working classes, the uneasy fear that attacks the rulers, the almost universal violence that is the most evident feature of life in these middle decades of the twentieth century. Wells is happy in his faith. He believes that civilization still is marching upwards and onwards, that the goal is now in sight, and that merely by education, without blood or class conflicts, we can attain the Great Good Place of which he dreams, where men like himself will "supply teaching, coercive and directive public services to the whole world."

Wells's Utopia belongs to the happy days before the War. Today it is less alive, and less skillfully embalmed, than Lenin's corpse in his tomb outside the Kremlin. Still, Wells himself lives on and ends by impressing us with his own sort of greatness. He is like the survivor of a prehistoric time, a warm, ponderous, innocent creature ill adapted to the Ice Age in which we live, and yet overshadowing the smaller animals that shiver behind rocks without ever venturing into the open. They have a bitter wisdom that he lacks, but they are not of his stature.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Soft Soap for the Barber

Father Goose: The Story of Mack Sennett, by Gene Fowler. New York: Covici, Friede. 407 pages. $3.

FROM Shirtsleeves to Shirtsleeves in one generation is just as true an American legend as from Ploughboy to President or from Poland to Polo. Moreover, we, who are without ambition, prefer it.

Mack Sennett went from boilermaker to president of the Keystone Company. The Keystone Company is finished and so is Mack Sennett. This fact should make everyone but Gilbert Seldes feel a little better. Perhaps one day a final chapter will be written to Drinkwater's biography of Carl Laemmle and to Will Irwin's biography of Adolph Zukor. Perhaps they too will go the way of Mack Sennett. Hope springs eternal, etc.

And yet, maybe the men who make the pictures are not to blame. Perhaps we should blame the man for whom the pictures are made—"the barber in Peoria." As Fowler says, "The history of the cinema indicates that a man will pay a dollar to get a dime's worth of entertainment, but will not part with a dime to get a dollar's worth of ideals"—or ideas. Fowler is right. Whenever somebody forgets this fact, forgets to ask what "the barber in Peoria" will think, a great deal of money is lost.

It is strange, but the movies are always trying to forget "the barber." Even Mack Sennett tried *once* to forget him. He lost several hundred thousand dollars, then took another look at the sign hanging on the wall of his scenario department. "Remember: The extent of intelligence of the average public mind is eleven years. Moving pictures should be made accordingly." Sennett never forgot again.

Other Hollywood directors and supervisors never seem to learn this lesson. Every year some one of them gets a little punch-drunk, goes highbrow and forgets "the barber." A picture like "The Crowd" is the result. "The barber" remains in his barbershop and the theatres are empty. It takes two or three films like "Dames" to get him to the Bijoux again.

Of course many things can be said in defense of "the barber." Gene Fowler wisely leaves that to Gilbert Seldes; we prefer to leave it to Mike Gold, and no offense meant.

NATHANAEL WEST.

Our Consumptive Consumption

America's Capacity to Consume, by Maurice Leven, Harold G. Moulton and Clark Warburton. Washington: The Brookings Institution. 283 pages. $3.

THE BOOK, according to a friend of mine, should have been entitled "America's Capacity to Endure." Perhaps the most significant thing about it is its convincing demonstration of the existence of economic classes in the United States, contrary to the wishful thinking of those whose minds are still wrapped in the sweet memories of the Revolutionary period of 1776.

A few things have changed since those days. Industrialization of this nation has run its course. From a handful of immigrants who were expanding frontiers, fighting Indians and English taxes, we developed into the leaders of the world, rich in natural resources, masters of technology and slaves of ideals that can no longer be realized under the changed circumstances. The 4.3 percent of chattel slaves are no more; but 43 percent of our people have become the slaves of pay envelopes, with no one interested in their maintenance when the pay envelope is not forthcoming. This has rent our citizenry into two economic classes—the wealthy, representing but 0.6 percent of the total population; and about 90 percent ranging between subsistence and poverty, minimum of comfort and moderate circumstances.

It is a cruel thing to blast our comfortable delusion that we have no proletarian population in this country by showing that 76.3 percent of us have an income that is below the standards of comfort and decency. It is no less shocking to learn of the sheer fancy of our belief that we are essentially a "middle-class" country: in 1929, only 7.7 percent of our middle class enjoyed an income of $5,000 or more. As the study proceeds, there unfolds a picture of two million families slowly starving (in 1929) on a pittance of less than $500 annual income. Half of the American families are now living in fear of losing even the precarious livelihood on an income below $1,700 a year. Over four million farmer families cannot make their living without a

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deficit or debt. Every fourth farmer family lives on $500 a year or less and only 10 percent of farm families earn $2,600 and over.

The sound technique employed in working out this statistical material did not permit the obscuring of the real issues involved by such usual camouflages as an "economic man" and national "averages." What "America's Capacity to Consume" deals with is the real flesh and bone and nerve of American men and women, with their empty stomachs and bare backs and shattered illusions.

Comparing the actual expenditures of American families of different economic classes during the height of our prosperity in 1929, the book shows that the lower class spends on eating less than *one-third* the amount spent for food by families earning $4,600 or more. For their clothing they spent only about *one-ninth* as much as the well-to-do families did. For their homes (or are such poor shelters homes at all?) the lower middle-class family can afford to spend but *one-eleventh* as much as the well-to-do.

After food, clothing and shelter are paid for, the lower-income families find themselves in debt. And yet there are other expenses to meet. Even though they did spend only *one-nineteenth* as much as the families in the upper-income brackets, still the poorer ones were left owing some two billion dollars.

A picture that lends further emphasis is given in the homely consideration of what we eat: "Nineteen million families, or 90 percent, were not in a position to enjoy a liberal diet"; while "about 12 percent of all non-farm families spent on the average approximately $350 for food, or sufficient merely . . . for emergency use."

Now that we feel somewhat crestfallen and less cocky about the glorious myth of an "American standard of living," it might be pertinent to ask an impertinent question: what are we going to do about it?

In an earlier volume of the Brookings Institution, "America's Capacity to Produce," it was conceded that we had 19 percent of idle productive capacity even in 1929. The output of these unused means was equivalent to some fifteen billion dollars, or enough to double the income of the lower-income class. How to direct this income into empty pockets, the Brookings authors do not presume to say. Perhaps it is none of their business. What they do say, however, regarding the possibility of obtaining a decent living for all, is that it "would require an increase in the production of all kinds of consumers' goods and services by something like 70 or 80 percent." And they do not think that so great an increase is at all possible under present economic conditions.

Actually the work of the Brookings authors presents a conflict between good statistics and poor engineering intelligence. This conflict, fortunately, has not stopped them from drawing the inevitable conclusion that *"in emphasizing the need of increasing consumption, we must not forget the necessity of simultaneously expanding production."*

That this production can be expanded, and expanded well beyond the standard budget, is adequately proved by competent authorities and substantiated by the data of trade associations, the United States Census and N.R.A. code hearings. Whatever adjustment will be needed to bring this about is the problem of national planning and policy behind it. As an engineering task it does not present any difficulty. As a social-economic problem, the Brookings authors are right in concluding (the italics are mine) that "Such an income in productive outputs is far beyond the capacity of our *economic system today.*"

WALTER N. POLAKOV.

Do You Write Short Stories?

Short Story Hits: 1933, edited by Thomas H. Uzzell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

Story in America: 1933-1934, edited by Whit Burnett and Martha Foley. New York: The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

The Best American Short Stories: 1934, edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

The Best British Short Stories: 1934, edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

Editor's Choice, edited by Alfred S. Dashiell. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.

AFTER reading through all these collections of best stories (the collection of worst stories isn't out yet: wait till you see the O. Henry Memorial Award), a person would be a fool not to make a good ringing generalization; but the only thing I can think of is that there are a powerful lot of them being written. Ever since Sherwood Anderson discovered that there was an easier formula than the old formula, more and more writers have become story writers, until now there are literally thousands of sketches published every year. As my kid brother told the drunk from the A.E.F., heading him off, Sure buddy, my kid brother said, Sure, we're all in the Argonne.

It is not so much that the short story has had a sudden and splendid renascence as a significant form (Mr. O'Brien and the Burnetts are always throwing us off the track in this regard, handling the subject with solemnity, as though it were the final expression and hope of the race, or the snowshoes of God). It is more that we, being sentient and in a hurry, have come upon a form and bent it around a little—as you might take a box constructed purely for its qualities as a box, knock the lid off and take the trays out, filling it with apples—and used it to ship what we can say about life in to the magazines. A bit of local color, the sketch of a character, a yarn, an episode, a meaningful comment—anything like that, moving along by action or mere vivid rhetoric, tied together by some emotional satisfaction in the conclusion, will make a story. Further restrictions would be silly and debar most of the good stuff being written.

And in the books I have here there is much good stuff. Very little of it is powerful, but what of that: I do not find the occasional touted Maupassant story I read powerful. Nearest of all in the group to the ideal of strong and lasting effect is Fred Miller's "New Year's Eve," about a few hours in the life of a family up against hunger and the cold, with three potatoes and the window smashed in by revelers. In addition to being as well worked out and universal as any of the others, it has more of the honest ring of having been written because he knew it and felt it and by God had to get it out of him. It is both true and beautiful.

Mr. Miller's story is in Uzzell's "Short Story Hits," which includes two other front-rank pieces, Meridel Le Sueur's touching "Fable of a Man with Pigeons," and Marjorie Rawlings' "Benny and the Bird Dogs"—a true whizz, the funniest of the lot. Mr. Uzzell has tried to represent all varieties of stories, including the good, the slick and the pulp; and although his book is thus partly unreadable, his best stories really top those of the other collections. (No one has seen fit to include Milburn's "Student in Economics," or for that matter and with the exception of the Miller story, anything so strong and fine.) There is also some good reading in "Story in America."

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There are "The Sled" and "So Help Me," fair yarns by Beulah Childers and Nelson Algren; a bright simple story by Zora Hurston; "The Finer Points," about the persecution of black by white, and good (Wayne Grover); fine shrewd pieces of writing by Faulkner (name) and Alan Marshall, both clouded by the desire to make significant stories out of shrewd pieces of writing; a pale piece by Ivan (Nobel Prize) Bunin; a quite good sketch by H. E. Bates (name); Gertrude Stein (name) with a peach of an account of some literary squabble or at least I hope it is about that. So on. Other unknowns among the writers are Anton Chekhov, John Peale Bishop, Zostchenko, Mary Heaton Vorse, Peter Neagoe, Eugene Jolas; and after all this high scorn for established reputations on the part of the Burnetts, one would expect something better than an average of fifteen made writers out of a total of thirty-four represented. Story carries some good material, but also a great deal of bad; and if the field is so chuck full of unrewarded talent as the editors claim, they would do well to take a little time off from self-praise and pooh-poohing of the larger magazines (which can and often do buy the best stuff out from under their noses), and print more of it.

And if, as Mr. O'Brien is always saying, a few little magazines are bringing out practically everything of worth, he also might produce evidence of same. In reprinted stories last year his own score was: Big Magazines, 21; Little, 8 (six of these from Story). This year it is Big, 17; Little, 13 (and nine of these from Story, and certainly not the best). If the big guns are firing good shots, why not say so. Also against Mr. O'Brien is the voice of deity with which he speaks from his yearly introductions, hailing snowballs as avalanches (last year Garcia Villa, now Paul Engle), chiding some, exhorting all to create greatly; and using the creations to sell his own name to the public, and paying the writers nothing, and all with this high and righteous air of one who has given all and shaved his head and will save souls gratis. Mr. O'Brien has a capacity for wide and careful reading and a taste for fresh stuff. He is doing us a service, but his biggest service is for Mr. O'Brien, and therefore there is small reason why his gullibility and awful platitudes should be particularly applauded.

This year's book seems quite a little better than last year's, with very good material from Alvah Bessie, Langston Hughes, Alan Marshall, Morley Callaghan; and fair stories by Paul Ryan, James N. Hall, Eugene Joffe, Benjamin Appel and Caroline Gordon. Less reporting than usual, almost no social writing; and also less of the artist as a little toddler, and how significant banalities can appear when seen from far enough below the table edge—the Bobbsey Twins, let us say, with a dash of what it takes. There is enough live and honest writing in it to put it far ahead of the collection from England where, despite Mr. O'Brien's report of a revival, there is still a lot of trying and little accomplishment. Quite a few of the stories are competent, but for the most part the book is pale, not moving.

Mr. Dashiell's volume hardly belongs with the other current anthologies: what it really amounts to is a mixture of Great Modern Short Stories (sixteen in all), and How to Write and Market the Story. In addition to good ones, by Kay Boyle, Faulkner, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Langston Hughes (just fair), Wolfe and Rawlings—beside these it represents Chekhov, Maupassant, O'Henry, Bierce, etc. I can't go very strongly for this latter body of writing; it reads much like a non-copyright miscellany. But the more current American stories serve to point the question of who is doing all the writing around here, and in what way. Most of those whose work carries the deepest appeal have written out of qualities that are germane to no particular form, were writing some years back, and are not equaled by the various finds each new crop of anthologies brings

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in. What chiefly comes to light in these collections is not great genius being liberated through the story form, anyway, but a scattering of people who have something to report that either would not be enough to fill a novel or represents, so to speak, a novelist's overflow. Such a body of writing is good to have: a quick introduction to a whole countryside of writers and what is going on in their separate ways of life. In 200 stories or so it becomes cumulative, a sort of literary straw vote, with the most valuable answers (from the point of view of freshness and interest at least) frequently coming from those who were not asked.

OTIS FERGUSON.

The Universe Alive

Nature and Life, by Alfred North Whitehead. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 46 pages. 50 cents.

THESE two brief lectures on philosophy give us an entire *Weltanschauung* in miniature, yet at the same time they show a critical penetration that summaries usually lack. Whitehead begins by sketching the "general commonsense notion of the universe" that was in process of formation among the more progressive thinkers of Europe around 1500. He next considers its breakdown, which continues until "the state of modern thought is such that every single item in this general doctrine is denied, but that the general conclusions from the doctrine as a whole are tenaciously retained." And he details the main respects in which Newtonian mechanics and Hume's empiricism seem to him inadequate. He holds that whereas "the status of life in Nature is the standing problem of philosophy and of science," the prevailing positivism is unable to deal with this problem meaningfully. Whitehead traces the difficulty back to Cartesian dualism, in which "the mental substances are external to the material substances." After offering grounds for his assertion that "the characteristics of life are absolute self-enjoyment, creative activity, aim," he shows that the methods of science, based upon sense perception, preclude the discovery of these characteristics. But an awareness of aim, he holds, is as much a fact of our experience as any sensory measurement might be. From this he proceeds to affirm the importance of the qualitative; and in conclusion he states as his key notion: "The energetic activity considered in physics is the emotional activity entertained in life." This would give us a living universe, organically related, rather than grinding wheels conceived after the factory model. The many sharp formulations that occur in the course of the discussion make these lectures as fertile and indicative a treatise on philosophy as one could possibly expect in so short a space.

KENNETH BURKE.

Books in Brief

California's Brown Book. Los Angeles: The American League Against War and Fascism. 16 pages. 5 cents.

THIS PAMPHLET describes, by means of affidavits and brief descriptive paragraphs, a few incidents of the terror that has been rampant in California in the last year. There are affidavits of striking seamen who, during the recent longshoremen's and seamen's strike, were "picked up" by the Red Squad, beaten, maimed and tortured in the best Hitler tradition, and then either booked on trumped-up charges or else released without even being booked or having charges preferred against them at all. There are examples of fascist brutality in Northern California, in Imperial in Los Angeles proper. When a committee appeared before the Los Angeles City Council to protest the illegality and outright barbarism of the local Red Squad, they were forcibly "ejected" by members of the Squad attired as plainclothesmen, and severe beatings were administered both to Leo Gallagher, the I.L.D. attorney, and Dr. Clinton J. Taft of the American Civil Liberties Union. In San Diego a death threat was sent, not only to the organizer of the Young Communist League, but also to a member of the Epic Youth League. The conclusion to be drawn by every reader of this account can be only this: that *we* already have incipient if not open fascism in California; and that the specific and verifiable incidents cited show definitely that American fascism is following precisely the example of its German precursor.

L. O.

Spies and the Next War, by Richard Wilmer Rowan. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. 311 pages. $2.50.

Spying is like the "third degree"; everybody knows that it is continually being resorted to, but those who know most about it rarely, if ever, speak of it. In the present book much curious information is gathered concerning this dark subject. Yet it is a most unsatisfying book; it is neither a systematic treatise nor a story of picturesque and perilous adventure, but a *mélange* of largely unrelated facts. Perhaps the most interesting chapter in the book is the story of Herr Wassmuss, the German consular agent who found himself stranded and isolated in southern Persia on the outbreak of the War, and who contrived with insignificant means to organize a vast system of espionage that did considerable damage to the Allied cause.

H. S.

Narcotics and Youth Today, by Robert E. Corradini. New York: Foundation for Narcotics Research, Inc. 113 pages, illustrated. 50 cents.

Published by a non-profit organization interested in public health and child hygiene, this little pamphlet attempts to tell a very sad story in terms of hope. The author, who is Executive Secretary of the Foundation (of which also Dr. Haven Emerson, Irving Fisher and Mary E. Woolley are active members), writes for teachers, educators and publicists. In salient outline he presents the most important facts regarding narcotics and alcohol: their origin, types and constitution, toxic effects upon the nervous, intestinal and respiratory systems, whether taken direct, as with the opiate group, or indirectly, in cigarettes, tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages. The verdict is almost invariably one of guilt, which of course simplifies matters considerably. A chapter with the somewhat dubious subtitle "race poisons" views with alarm the disruptive effects of alcohol and habit-forming drugs upon racial vigor, and overstates the connection between alcoholism and heredity; here science yields to propaganda of the alarmist variety.

H. W.

Three Men Die, by Sarah Gertrude Millin. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Julia Taplin feared life without money. When the young man to whom she was engaged died and left her with a small sum of money, she invested it at low interest to get the greatest possible safety. For the same reason she married Alexander Bishop, who was fourteen years her senior and whom she did not love. In time she found him a nuisance and came to want luxury as well as safety; but when he died suddenly in convulsions, the suggestible

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death was acute nephritis. When Julia's second husband died in strikingly similar circumstances, two weeks after making a will in her favor, his brother was a good deal annoyed and also talked about a postmortem; but the attending physician was again serenely obtuse. Julia's third matrimonial venture was more satisfying. This time she was passionately in love with her husband, but now Johnnie, her son by Bishop, proved troublesome, showing jealousy and demanding a share of his father's money. So presently Johnnie died—*in convulsions*—and again (is South Africa really such a poisoner's paradise?) there was a postmortem and, for a time at least, they called it malaria. Mrs. Millin's account of all this is competent and more or less plausible, but the only passages that have much depth or sensitivity are a few of those dealing with the tormented adolescent, Johnny. M. G.

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Contributors

JOHN P. DAVIS is executive secretary of the Joint Committee on National Recovery, a group formed from twenty-three national organizations to protect the interests of Negro workers under the Recovery Act. He has made numerous field studies of Negro working conditions both before and after the adoption of codes.

LANGSTON HUGHES is the author of "Not Without Laughter," a novel, "Ways of White Folks," a collection of short stories, and of several volumes of verse. He is now at work on a book about the Soviet Union, whence he has recently returned.

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KENNETH BURKE is the author of "The White Oxen," "Towards a Better Life" and "Counter-Statement." He is preparing a critical study, "Perspective by Incongruity," a companion piece to his "On Interpretation," published by Plowshare.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Lee Oremont, Herman Simpson, Harold Ward and Martha Gruening.

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